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ENGLAND

AND

THE ENGLISH.

BY EDWARD LYTTON BULWER, ESQ., M.P.,

AUTHOR OF "PELHAM," "DEVEREUX," AND "EUGENE ARAM."

"Ordine gentis
"Mores, et studia, et populos, et prælia dicam." VIRGIL.

"Every now and then we should examine ourselves: self-amendment is the offspring of self-knowledge. But foreigners do not *examine* our condition; they only glance at its surface. Why should we print volumes upon other countries and be silent upon our own? Why traverse the world and neglect the phenomena around us? Why should the spirit of our researches be a lynx in Africa and a mole in England? Why, in one word, should a nation be never criticised by a native?" MONTAGU.

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A VIEW

OF THE

LATE EVENTS AND THE LATE CHANGES.

PREFIXED TO THE THIRD EDITION.

July 21st, 1834.

It is now, my friends, nearly a year since this Work first appeared.—The wheel has not stood still!—twice it has brought the Ministry to the ground,—tearing away first the limbs—then the head—and now presenting it to us once more aloft and triumphant—whole and high-crested as before. Talk of a Hydra being a fable—no such thing—the story of the Hydra was merely a type, a symbol, a prophecy of the Cabinet of 1834!

But of men hereafter: let us glance first at the revolutions of things,—to me the progress of Destiny seems a more important survey than the shifts and changes, the breaking up and the repairing of the instruments with which the dark Operator works her way. The wheel has not stood still! Twelve months ago, for instance, and the question of separating Church and State was a speculative theory; *now* it is the

talk of the day: when there is so short a step between the closet and the market-place, what algebra shall calculate the velocity of transition?—the steam principle does not stop at the high roads—it is at work in the Cabinet, in the Parliament, in every man's hearth. And what has thus accelerated the movement? my friends, two causes chiefly—irritation and distrust. You will make the dullest cart-horse in the world run away if you first frighten him, and then show you are frightened yourself: in vain then you say "so ho," and "poor fellow;" in vain you tug at the bridle—he has got the bit between his teeth—your heels, swaying here and there, dig into his side—he sees that you conciliate him only because you are afraid of him—he feels that you would beat him if you dare—away he goes faster and faster; pray God for a high wall or a turnpike-gate to stop him at last. "What a brute of a horse," you say, "what a dangerous, runaway, revolutionary animal!" My dear sir, it is the rider that is in fault. Let us come back to the Church question. A year ago it was a matter for philosophers to discuss, and now it is a theme upon which every fool may declaim. But just consider—you, my Lords, and you the Right Honourable Gentlemen who have been good enough to govern us, with so much condescending reluctance—just consider, how could it be otherwise in the way you have been dealing with that question? First of all you unsettle men's minds by allowing that a great reform is necessary; you break down all the fences and barriers of custom, of opinion, of sanctifying and venerable silence, and having prepared men for this great reform—having conceded to them its necessity—

you stop at once in your measures; you begin to talk doubtingly and act coldly—your mountain of words breeds the least little mouse of effects—you disturb us with the cry of reform, only to disappoint us with the reformers; you set your horse a-gallop with a shout, and then show him that he is the master, by your piteous strokings and cajolleries, your pattings and your caresses. Thus with the Dissenters — nothing could equal their wrongs, God bless them!—never were poor men so hardly used—they were wronged at the date of their birth, at the hour of their marriage, at the moment of their death; birth, marriage, and death, each were an epoch for oppression! You taught them to hope redress, to co-operate for redress, you made them strong and bitter in the sense of wrong, ardent and united in the assurance of justice—and, having thus created your monster, there you leave him! Correcting none of the principles of which the Dissenters complain; evincing no frank, no generous desire to relieve; making it your object not to give, as much as you can, compatible with safety, but as little as you can, compatible with fear, you come forward with your miserable Marriage Bill; and, having put off your creditor from day to day with a prodigality of promises and politeness, just when he thinks you are going to give him interest as well as principle, you offer him a penny in the pound! This will not do; this is not wise. Alas, it is thus that revolutions are indeed made names of dread!—all the greatest excesses which ever disgraced a people have a common origin—a government that flatters hope and insists on disappointment;

a government that deals with the vast and fearful questions that decide on the doom of ages, merely as it suits the petty purpose of the day;—a government that unsettles every thing by words, and settles nothing by actions. From the disappointment of that Marriage Bill sprung up at once the distrust of the Dissenters. You paltered with their claims when they demanded what it was easy to give; they replied by asking what it is necessary to deny. They acted upon a principle which you had taught them —a principle that it is necessary to demand much in order to gain a little. I doubt, in the cry of Separation of Church and State, if the Dissenters really imagined the time was ripe to urge the theory, or hope for its success. But many of them thought it well to press the question, that it might terrify you by its mere noise; they set up the war-cry which seemed most calculated to frighten you into terms. When will you learn not to give arms to those to whom you refuse an alliance?—when will you learn never to promise more than you intend to grant?—when will you learn, that if you concede at all, you must concede enough to satisfy?—when will you learn, that if you do less than this, you revolt one half of society without conciliating the other half? Now, no man knows how far he can depend on you—no man knows whether your conduct be influenced by honest imbecility or calculating deceit. If the agitation of that question of separation between Church and State be in some degree appeased, you owe it to a man who has just those qualities which most men want—the best qualities to govern—and often the only

qualities to save—a state;—viz. frankness and courage. When Lord Durham took the chair at the Dissenters' meeting, did he flatter their wishes?—did he disguise his opinions?—did he speak ambiguously? He set the matter on the proper ground, transferring it from an abstract theory to a practical question, forcing into consideration all the circumstances by which it is beset and entangled; not treating it as a simple proposition—not debating whether or not Church and State should be ever united in all countries—but whether they should now be separated in this. In a highly complex and artificial state of society you cannot decide on the good or evil of measures either by maxims from philosophers or texts from the Bible. Our principles of government are like our bodies, you must suit their clothing to the climate they are to inhabit. By a few words free from all declamation and all passion, Lord Durham did more to suspend the agitation of that question than all the bishops, and all the addresses, and all the mummeries of Oxford, and all the Doctor Dragoons, and all the lacrymose levies, have done, and will do. But the magic was less in the words themselves than in the character of the speaker. Men know they can rely on his honesty and depend upon his word. Through that mystic glamour which now surrounds public men—in which all faces, all forms seem variable, shadowy, and indistinct, there shines forth one bright and steady integrity, which shifts not with the changes of the atmosphere, and every day it attracts more and more faithfully the hopes and hearts of England.

But I pause here. The Cabinet has been dissolved

—it is remodelled—we have lost Lord Grey—we see Lord Melbourne in his seat. Lord Althorp has lain Pirithous-like in that gloomy realm—ex-official life; —the Hades of statesmen. We, the House of Commons, have been the Hercules that restored him to the sunlight of the Treasury benches. It has not been the most difficult of our labours—may it be among our most profitable. But, before we examine the new, let us glance back at the old, Administration. For my own part, on looking at their past life, I cannot tell on what individual to fix the blame that attaches to all. I see men of splendid intellect, of long experience, of stainless character; men, who if inclined by station to preserve authority, have yet tasted the sweets of acquiring the people's love. Yet the result of all these combinations was the reverse of what any prophet would have foretold: some fatal drug seems to have been poured into the alembic, and the reward of the alchemy was not gold but cinders! Ben Jonson has somewhat well described the mysteries of their crucible:—

SUBTLE. — Name the vexations and the martyrizations of metals in the work * * * What 's cohobation?

FACE. — 'Tis the pouring on your AQUA REGIS—and then drawing him off.

SUBTLE.—Your magisterium, now—What 's that?

FACE.—Shifting, sir, your elements—dry into cold, cold into moist, moist into hot, hot into dry!*

We did indeed believe that Mr. Stanley and his political partisans in the Cabinet were the cause of the weakness and division that we lamented. They left the Cabinet; but was the Cabinet more united

* Alchemist, Act ii. Sc. 4.

than before? Did their resignation give us a single assurance that the Government would have been more liberal, or more energetic. The Ministers threw away their trumps to strengthen their hands, but their cards were not more of a suit; unsorted and confused—knave—king—and deuce—all of a different colour—such cards would have puzzled the best players—and these only continued to rely, not on skill—but chance—their hope was not in their own game, but in that of their adversaries. *Is it not that these Ministers lived in a coterie—that they saw no more of the world than a hermit does—that their public opinion was that of a clique and a club?*

And yet you, my fellow countrymen, with all your movement, all your radicalism, all your wretched cant about the march of the day, seem as far from progressing to the right end as ever you were. Your

* Take one instance: they saw not how far, by preserving the stamp-duty on political intelligence, they divided one part of the community from the other—how far they created two publics appealed to by two different classes of writers; the rich and the middle class appealed to by the safe lawful papers—the poor and the ignorant class appealed to by the contraband inflammatory journals. Fierce and wild are the discussions which hourly agitate the working classes; no nice questions of the day, but questions searching the core of all civilised society—questions which go to sanction robbery, and legalize bloodshed. The worst doctrines of the worst schools are dinned into the ears of the vast mass, and receive no reply—how often must we repeat this truth—and in vain! Unconscious of all that is at work below them, Ministers floated on the surface, toying with the straws. A certain quack, in the time of an earthquake, advertised pills to cure earthquakes:—the quack would have been a notable acquisition to the last Cabinet!

rage against window-taxes and house-taxes, your spite against the pension-list,* your vague cry against the bishops—all this does not benefit you, nor prove either your wisdom or your generosity. If my book be true—and I defy you to gainsay it—the main counter-influence to good government in England, is not that of church or monarchy—it is that of England's *peculiar* aristocracy:† yet you do not seem, amidst all your indignation at jobs, to perceive that your whole commonwealth is one great job for your aristocracy. Is a Colonial Government vacant—some needy rich man must be sent out to pocket its revenue. Is a place at home vacant—what Peer or what heir's connexion will best bear transplanting to the sunny situation? Look, for instance, at the Post-office department—a place, above all others, requiring a man of long habits of business; of great experience in the mastery of details, hard-working, laborious, self-denying, and yet withal possessed of a statesman's mind, and recognising in this complicated office the great machine of civilization, the moral engine by which all interests, public and private, are communicated—the true political, lite-

* The pension-list is a bad thing and should be revised; but the wrath it excites is the wrath of spite, not principle. Even the great Bentham said he would spare the pensioners, because to take away their salaries would be to occasion more pain to the individuals than could be counterbalanced by good to the community.

† I say the aristocracy peculiar to this country, because certain forms of aristocracy are probably the best forms of government, and because it is quite certain that no state except an absolute despotism will ever be free from aristocratic influences.

rary, and trade's union of England!—such is that contrivance which is so familiar to us, and of which not half the uses are yet discovered: and not, from from a want of industry, nor of habits of business, but from a deficiency in statesmanship—from views that comprehended details, but blinked at a principle; for this the Duke of Richmond was not fitted to his task. A man who questions whether to obtain a knowledge of all the affairs, all the commerce, all the trading, all the scientific, all the political concerns of Europe, be worth £3000 a year to this Government, so lavish on trifles—such a man might be an admirable clerk, but he could only be a petty minister.

But, with all the faults of the Duke of Richmond, whom have you got in his stead? — The Marquis of Conynghame. — The who?— I hear you say — you never heard of him—nor anybody else out of the drawing-rooms of London. With a vast flourish of trumpets went the recruiting party to augment their awkward squad; they beat up and down Rotten-Row, deployed into Almacks, and succeeded at last in enlisting the Marquis of Conynghame!

Lord Conynghame may falsify our predictions; he may prove himself an admirable statesman; but there was no reason to suppose it. The new Wilhelm Meister has served no apprenticeship. Unless the Government had been unwholesomely aristocratic, he could not have been set down to a game in which a Tyro is to play the stakes of the People.—May he come out of it with credit, in proportion to the little we have a right to expect from him!

But by this single instance, however it terminate,

you may perceive that it is an Aristocracy, not a Monarchy, that preys upon you; and that there may be worse jobs than those of the pension list,—Debrett's Peerage is the true Black-book. You may judge of the true Constitution of a State by the men whom the State selects for office and for power. The real Representatives of a people to Foreign States and to Posterity are not its Senators, but its Ministers. A great question begins more and more to press upon you; how will you bring your hereditary chamber into harmony with your representative? Whatever means you resort to, beware of increasing the number of the Lords; it is their number now that makes them venal and place-hunting; fifty new peers will be but fifty new leeches to the public purse. There is something in the money of the people irresistibly dear to these noble place-hunters. Do not fancy that their own property, be it ever so great—choose you your new peers from the richest of the land — do not fancy that their own property will content them. You will see in these pages that all men in England, but most the wealthiest and the highest, live beyond their incomes. A peer with £100,000 a year has often less ready money than a commoner with £500 a year. The very nature of great accumulations of landed property, with its entails and its mortgages, is to create and to sanctify splendid pauperism; to increase your peers is but to aristocratize still more your offices. Meet then the question of reforming your Hereditary Chamber boldly and fairly. It is a part of the Poor Law System in which men are paid by the scale; not in proportion to the merits of the labourer, but in pro-

portion to his inability to obtain work elsewhere, or to the size of his family. Would you like a reform in the poor laws that increased the number of paupers? No! then like no reform of the Lords that will increase the number of peers. Go to the root of the evil, or do not meddle with it at all. Let me draw your attention to another point,—I moved, this session, that Ministers should be allowed seats, in the House of Commons, in virtue of their office, but without the privilege of voting unless they were returned by a constituency. The gentlemen who write in the daily journals, and the tools of corruption in the senate, fancied this a tory and undemocratic motion: it was just the reverse; it would be an amazing counterpoise to the Aristocratic scale: for, do but observe how your present system must operate, —Ministers must be chosen, and are chosen, not in proportion as they can fill office with honor, but as they can vacate their seats with safety. But who vacate their seats most easily? Those who have the greatest property in the places which return them,—the possession of property is more solid and less fluctuating than the possession of popular applause. In the small divisions of counties, a man who has a preponderating estate has something very like a close borough; he can be returned more easily than the member for a town; a Ministry, just in proportion to its weakness, will choose its new allies from those who can vacate their seats most easily; that is, from persons of the most property! But this is not all, they will prefer choosing, where they can, a man who need not vacate his seat at all; they will prefer a peer to a commoner; your present system

only plays into the hands of the aristocracy, and under popular forms supports unpopular appointments. This, if you saw your true enemy clearly in the excess of the Aristocratic influence, you would instantly guard against—you would make support to a Bill that should secure you the best ministers, a popular question, and an electioneering pledge. And you would equally secure your power over Ministers whom you might cease to return, by retaining it over the majority of the House by whose support Ministers can alone exist. Observe all the answers to the question are aristocratic:—"I should feel awkward," says Lord Althorp, "if I could *not* vote—if I were not member for Northamptonshire:" that is, if I were not of the same consequence as I am now. "Oh," says another, "if this were the case, a man might be a Minister who was never in the House of Commons." Don't you perceive in this answer the jealousy of the House of Commons—how it loves to keep the good things to itself? Where would be the evil of choosing a Minister not in the House at the time. I am sure, with all respect to the House of Commons, there are as able men in the world as there are within those oak walls of St. Stephen's. If it be desirable to govern the country on free-trade principles, I make no doubt that Dr. Bowring would be as good a vice-president of the Board of Trade, as any one else. Such are the objections to the measure; consider the subject well, that is all I ask of you; you have only to reflect upon it, to see that it is of far more importance to good government than it appears at the first blush; and that without it, you will gradually throw

your offices into the hands of the country squires and the House of Lords.

But I repeat now what I have said in the body of this Work, that if your aristocracy exercise too pervading and unwholesome an influence, you alone can permanently correct the evil by exalting your own standard of moral opinion—by creating an aristocracy of your own—an aristocracy of worth and of intellect; by which you will measure the claims of the vulgar great. Get rid of your atrocious exclusiveness. What was that musical festival at Westminster Abbey the other day?—'a great national solemnity—a great public fête,' cry the journals! Yes, from the enjoyment of which the nation and the public were carefully excluded; tickets ten guineas each!—a pretty patriotic national price! An entertainment in England is never approved of, if Dives sees the hard face of Lazarus smiling by his side. A dinner was given to the gallant Mina: why on earth should people give him a dinner at all, except from his attachment to popular opinions? and yet the gratitude and affection of the people were carefully excluded from the entertainment. The price of the ticket to the dinner was 2*l.* 2*s.*, in order that the party might be select. No sympathy costing less than two guineas was worth having. The right of seeing a brave man, and hearing generous sentiments, was estimated at two pounds two! Even in your most ordinary amusements, how exclusive you are! Your favourite Sunday lounge in the Zoological gardens is protected from the people; that resort with its illustrations of Natural History, which would afford so much interest, and no little instruction, to the

poor, is shut out from them on the only day they could have leisure to frequent it. Nay, if it were open—you would call the amusement wicked. Your piety places a dragon in the shape of a Sunday Bill, on every relaxation, for those who are not idle by profession.

"Why are you all gentlemen at Athens?" said the Egyptian to the Athenian. "Because," was the answer, "all that delights gentlemen are for the people." The Baths, the Gardens, the Public Meetings, the Public Amusements—the People were invited to all. But with us, there is only one agora for the people, and that is the gin-shop! No love softens their hard lot; you never attempt to amuse, to solace, to refine them. All work and no play—our institutions are like certain schools, which advertise to doting parents—"N. B. No Holydays!" Even the poor little Sunday, with its few and scant remnants of relaxation—its jaunt, its tea-garden, its sail upon the water—its summer stroll, and its winter club—is in disgrace. There it stands in the stocks:—a crowd of legislative pedagogues round it, ferule in hand, ready to strike if it dare to stir. O my God! was not Plutarch right, when he asked if it were not a less sin to deny thee, than to call thee ill-natured and morose? "I would not care," said that amiable gossip—the Montaigne of the old world—"if a man said Plutarch never existed; but I think I should be very angry if he said that Plutarch was a gloomy fellow—displeased at the pleasure of others."

But this is a type of a general system. Our legislature is ever ready for blows, and reluctant in kind-

ness. So if at last we force through the House of Commons a bill to soften the punishment of death—or to allow a poor ignorant prisoner the defence of counsel—it stops at once at the House of Lords. "There is no time for this very important measure," says one. —"Suspend it, by all means," cries another.—"What an accumulation of business!" cries a third. —"Let us get on with the Coercion Bill," cry all!—Conciliatory measures with us are born lame and halting—harsh measures have thews of brawn and feet of speed. But do not blame your rulers only in this. O my countrymen! blame yourselves. Why do you exercise your strength only when in a passion? Why all your meetings—your harangues—for some isolated grievance of a day? Why do you not evince a calm and constant majesty of strength, and insist more upon the *general* principles of your government, and far less on their *individual* and *isolated* measures? To make your Ministers love the people, show that you love the people yourselves. Pluck from your hearts your adoration of the rich—legislate for the poor—not for their relief from taxes only—but their relief from harsh laws, and their own errors. Do you fear their violence? so do I. Then curb that violence by educating, harmonizing, refining them. To destroy a mob, you must inspire a people. Interfere not with their relaxations. Leave them their happy Sabbath. Trust me, whatever amuses men innocently is a great civilizer; and, above all, recollect that severe punishments brutalize the nature—you fit the nature to the punishment. Read the following extract from the pages of a great man. Among the

blessings which the pursuits of literature have afforded me, I rank this as not the least, that the statesman-author of the work I refer to, unknown to me but in name and fame, sent me his code of laws, as a token of esteem. But to the extract.

"History presents to us the magic glass on which, by looking at past, we may discern future events. It is folly not to read; it is perversity not to follow its lessons. If the hemlock had not been brewed for felons in Athens, would the fatal cup have been drained by Socrates? If the people had not been familiarized to scenes of judicial homicide, would France or England have been disgraced by the useless murder of Louis or of Charles? If the punishment of death had not been sanctioned by the ordinary laws of those kingdoms, would the one have been deluged with the blood of innocence, of worth, of patriotism, and science, in her revolution? Would the best and noblest lives of the other have been lost on the scaffold, in her civil broils? Would her lovely and calumniated Queen, the virtuous Malsherbes, the learned Condorcet—would religion, personified in the pious ministers of the altar—courage and honour, in the host of high-minded nobles—and science, in its worthy representative Lavoisier—would the daily hecatomb of loyalty and worth—would all have been immolated by the stroke of the guillotine; or Russel and Sydney, and the long succession of victims of party and tyranny, by the axe? The fires of Smithfield would not have blazed; nor, after the lapse of ages, should we yet shudder at the name of St. Bartholomew, if the ordinary ecclesiastical law had not

usurped the attributes of divine vengeance, and by the sacrilegious and absurd doctrine, that offences against the Deity were to be punished with death, given a pretext to these atrocities. Nor, in the awful and mysterious scene on Mount Calvary, would that agony have been inflicted, if by the daily sight of the cross, as an instrument of justice, the Jews had not been prepared to make it one of their sacrilegious rage. But there is no end of the examples which crowd upon the memory, to show the length to which the exercise of this power, by the law, has carried the dreadful abuse of it, under the semblance of justice. Every nation has wept over the graves of patriots, heroes, and martyrs, sacrificed by its own fury. Every age has had its annals of blood."*

Is not this true as eloquent? But do not imagine that capital punishments are alone to be mitigated; penal enactments may be as harsh from their number as from their severity. That man breathes not freely who lives in an atmosphere of law.

And now let us return from a view of measures to a survey of men. While I write, still rings in the ears of England the parting valediction of a man whose monument is the new charter of her liberties; one whom while we opposed in power we may yet honor in retirement, for his failings were precisely those which an honest politician would expose frankly, while it was time to amend them, and forget in a general reverence for a high nature and noble qualities, the moment he exchanges public life for the dignified retirement of an illustrious old age. In the same pilot whom we

* Livingstone's System of Penal Laws, p. 125.

advised, we urged, we admonished, we rebuked, amidst the shoals and quicksands which he appeared to disregard — we remember only the great storm through which he steered us, when his rest is won, and he hangs his last chaplet in the temple whence his name will not readily be effaced. And if I have spoken plainly and openly of the errors of the late Cabinet, if I still pursue the theme, it is not without a certain reluctance; nor from any less urgent motive than the wish that those errors should be a warning to them who come after a great man, and from whom less will be forgiven. It is easier to avoid his faults than to emulate his fame.

The great error of Lord Grey was in this—he saw not the necessary consequences of his own measure: in the loftiness of a haughty but not discerning mind, he imagined that the people owed him the gratitude of an unhesitating confidence—that they should rely implicitly on his wisdom—and take at his own time whatever instalments of reform it might be convenient to afford them. And this confidence the people would have cheerfully reposed in him, but for some fatal errors at the very commencement of the Reformed Parliament. The mere selection of a Tory Speaker, trifling as the circumstance may seem, and justified as it might be by the talents, the experience, and the popularity of Sir Charles Manners Sutton, damped to a degree scarcely conceivable by many, the ardour of the people. It was the first act of the Reformed Parliament. "Here," said the electors, "have we been sacrificing a thousand private interests, to return to Parliament liberal men, and their first act is to call to the highest office in their

gift one of exactly opposite opinions. True, he is able and experienced, and estimable, and so forth; but so were the Tory candidates who presented themselves to us. We have lost many a good pound a year—displeased landlord and customer, in order to reject men, merely from their opinions—and now—what can we think? our representatives lavish in the Parliament their highest honours on the very opinions they stigmatized as atrocious on the hustings." This was the view the people took of that election:—turn the question as much as they would, they could take no other. Then came not an act of grace—not a corollary from reform, but a Coercive Bill, that annihilated in one blow, the right of petitioning—of meeting—of juries—all constitutional liberty for Ireland! The people of England, perhaps, were sufficiently revolted by the excesses of Ireland, and startled by the cry of Repeal—not to care much for the wrong to Ireland, but they cared deeply for the wrong to Liberty. Then this question took up half a session. "Where is the good of our reforming Ministers?" cried the people every week—and every week they read nothing in the papers but the debates about instituting a Court-martial for a Jury-box. I need not go through the rest of the causes of discontent—*the discontent was begun*, and that was enough to take grace from many a remedial measure. What cared the people for the India Bill and the Bank Question? vast and important as those measures were, they might equally have been settled without a Reformed Parliament. And it must not be forgotten, when we speak of the gratitude of the people, that public opinion is ever a suspicious and jealous

judge. The Reform Bill was a boon to the people, but it was also the destruction of the Tories. It depended upon the consequences of the Reform Bill to show, whether that measure were intended for the benefit of the people, or for the monopoly of power; for the extermination of political abuses, or the extermination of party enemies. It was therefore a necessary policy (if you desired to obtain and preserve the gratitude of the people) to give no excuse for them to question the justice of your claims to it. But what was the fact?—they felt their taxes very little lighter; they heard military sinecures called "a gentlemanlike reward," and civil pensions "a compact with national honour." Their burdens were much the same as before. How then had *they* benefited? Little satisfied with this view of the question, they reverse the picture, they see the Whigs in power, the Tories crushed and prostrate; and they exclaim immediately to each other—"It is not *we* who are the better for the Reform Bill, it is the Ministers: we owe them no gratitude for abuses purified, and taxes taken off; they owe *us* gratitude for having settled upon them an hereditary estate of office." The people judged hastily: much is to be said on both sides, but you must not condemn them for want of gratitude; it was your own fault if, instead of disdaining to be *suspected* of self-interest, you did not rather disdain to *incur* the appearance of such a motive, and place the claim to gratitude beyond a cavil or a doubt. But the Grey Cabinet is dissolved. Let us believe its errors were not of the heart: let us remember all the difficulties of situation which surrounded it—composed of men of all

shades of opinion; but each of eminent ability, whom it was dangerous to lose:—a Tory chamber above, a liberal chamber below—every one who belonged to it hearing nothing in private but fears and apprehensions of going too far, and seeing only the public mind, through the dim and shifting mirror of a clamorous but illogical press. As men progress by the errors of their predecessors, so may the present Cabinet grow wise by the deficiencies of the last. It is not rash, it is not revolutionary measures that the people or the friends of the people desire. Let them, if they will, leave the House of Commons as it is—with all its faults, *that* is not the chamber which now demands reform:—but let them think seriously of reducing taxation; let them beware of all further defence of notorious abuses; and, if they agree to conciliate any particular body—the Dissenters of England, or the Catholics of Ireland—let them not do it by halves: a little water kindles the fire, not smothers. There is only a difference in degree between that which irritates and that which conciliates.

The present Cabinet is remodelled from the last.—It was an antient question with the Sophists whether the ship in which Theseus sailed to Crete was the same ship as that still called the ship of Theseus in the days of Demetrius Phalareus—so often had it been patched and repaired—now a new mast—now a new keel—that its identity was a matter of considerable perplexity upon which no two metaphysicians could agree.—The ship is a parallel to the present Administration.—Is it or is it not the same as the last Administration?—some say it is—some not. I am of the latter opinion; I think

it is another Administration, and a better one.—The people have gained a step—the majority of the Government are transferred from the less to the more popular side.—Lord Duncannon and Sir John Hobhouse are worthy allies of Mr. Abercromby and Mr. Ellice. And this advance in opinion, which is for the benefit of the people, is also for the strength of the Government. The new components have neutralized many of the late elements of dissension. It is a ship not for show, but for movement.

So far as it goes then the new Administration seems wisely modelled; but we may regret that its changes were not more comprehensive. Above all, that the Cabinet has not gained the services of one man on whom the affectionate esteem of England has been long fixed, and without whom no Administration can be widely popular. It is the old story in Tacitus—All eyes are fixed upon that image which is *not* a part of the procession. . . One error the statesmen of the closet are too apt to form—they confound what is firm with what is rash—they imagine that a man whom the people trust must necessarily rush into extremes—that the people are clamorous in proportion as they are confiding. It is just the reverse. From him on whose honesty they firmly rely the people will bear delay, and demand with moderation. It is the timid whom they seek to frighten—the slow whom they spur—the insincere whom they suspect. Let them see one whom they know their friend at the helm, and they will be less impatient at the length of the voyage.

I am about, my friends, to conclude this long and

discursive address to you — wrung from me in haste, and from the heart, by the ominous events of the time. The book which, with some additions, I now re-present to you, and which you received at its first appearance with so much favour, is the result of the observations of a life; it embodies the political creed of one who has known something of books and men—a creed too so little fanatical, even in the freedom it asserts as holy—that many of those most disinclined to change, regarding it dispassionately and free from the influences of party, have found it differ little from their own secret articles of faith. For extreme opinions are allowable in the philosopher who goes beyond his age; but not for the politician, who rather seeks to be the companion than the prophet, and who would only precede those whom he attempts to guide so far as never to be out of sight. Every man has his theoretical models of government fixed indelibly in his mind—his ideal and his dream—but he who deals with practical life takes into consideration the various artificial systems by which he is surrounded, and does not measure all mankind by the ideal proportions of his moral Apollo. It is true, that in this age, when, thanks to the invention of printing, Nations are not easily undone—and knowledge prevents whatever errors we may commit, from becoming irremediable in their effects—it is true that in this age we may laugh at those who threaten us at every false step with the eternal destruction of a great people. A violent policy—a conflict of extremes—even the fiercest revolution itself—does *not* destroy the existence of a people, but it may destroy the happiness of a

generation :—To legislate wisely, we must legislate for the living, as well as the unborn—nor imitate the ambitious miser, who made his children beggars for the benefit of the fourth generation. And therefore it was the wisest saying of the wisest lawgiver of old, when being asked, 'if he had given the best laws to the Athenians,' he replied, 'the best laws they are capable of receiving.' It is on that principle that I have written this book: whatever its faults, or its deficiencies, it comes from an honest and disinterested friend. Neither here nor elsewhere have I bowed one conscientious opinion to the idols of the hour—nor made, as I might easily have done, either pen or speech an instrument in the path of ministerial favour;—taking to myself, indeed, little credit for that disinterestedness, inasmuch as the pursuits and habits of my life render me keen-sighted to the torments of political ambition—suffice to procure me far deeper and more serene enjoyments than reward the feverish avidity of petty honours—and promise me—if a less noisy and less glittering, yet a more enduring and universal distinction—than the subalterns of a Minister can reasonably hope to see gathering around the creatures of a day.

ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE FIRST EDITION.

It is only to express my thanks to certain kind correspondents for the assistance they have afforded me, that I shall delay the Reader from the work now before him. To one gentleman of the highest scientific attainments and reputation I am indebted for many suggestions, of which I have availed myself in my brief view of the "State of Science"—to another gentleman, qualified, perhaps before all men living, to judge profoundly of the philosophy of Bentham, I am also indebted for considerable aid in the sketch of that remarkable writer's moral and legislative codes which will be found in the Appendix to the second volume; and to the taste and critical knowledge of a third gentleman I owe many obligations in the chapter devoted to the survey of the "State of the Arts" amongst us at this time. To the last gentleman my acknowledgments are perhaps the greater, because he has suffered me, in his general approbation of my theories, to apply a part of his knowledge to *some* conclusions with which he does not wholly agree.

London, July 9, 1833.

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BOOK THE FIRST.

VIEW OF THE ENGLISH CHARACTER.

INSCRIBED

TO HIS EXCELLENCY

THE PRINCE TALLEYRAND.

"Before you can rectify the disorders of a state, you must examine the character of the people."—VOLTAIRE.

——————————"I am he
Have measured all the shires of England over,
For to these savages I was addicted
To search their natures and make odd discoveries."
The New Inn. BEN JONSON. Act 5, Scene 5.

VIEW OF THE ENGLISH CHARACTER.

CHAPTER I.

Apology for Freedom with a great Name—National Prejudices illustrated—Distinctions between the Vanity of the French and English—The Root of our Notions is the Sentiment of Property—Anecdote of the French Patriot and the English one—The sense of Independence—Its Nature with us defined—Freedom *not* the Cause of Unsociability—Effects of Commerce upon the Disposition to Gaiety—Story of the Dutchman and the English Merchant.

I AM about, in this portion of my work, to treat of the character of my countrymen: for when a diplomatist like your Excellency is amongst them, they may as well be put upon their guard. I shall endeavour to tell my countrymen the causes that have stamped with certain impressions the National Character, in the belief that the knowledge of self is a better precaution against deceit, than even the suspicion of others. I inscribe this portion of my work to your Excellency on the same principle as that on which the Scythian

brought to Darius a mouse, a bird, a fish, and a bundle of arrows:—they were the symbols of his nation, and given as instructions to its foe. I also make up my bundle of national symbols, and I offer it to the representative of that great people with whom for eight centuries we have been making great wars, occasioned by small mistakes. Perhaps if the symbols had been rightly construed a little earlier, even a mouse and a fish might have taught us better. A quarrel is, nine times out of ten, merely the fermentation of a misunderstanding.

I have another reason for inscribing these preliminary chapters to Prince Talleyrand: this is not the first time he has been amongst us—great changes have been over the world during the wide interval between his first and his present visit to England. Those changes which have wrought such convulsions in states, have begun by revolutions in the *character* of nations;—every change in a constitution is occasioned by some change in the people. The English of the present day are not the English of twenty years ago. To whom can I dedicate my observations on the causes that influence character so fittingly as to the man who can read character at a glance? The consciousness that I set over my testimony so penetrating a judge must make me doubly scrupulous as to its accuracy: and my presumption in appealing to such an arbiter, is an evidence, indeed, of teme-

rity; but it is also a proof of my honesty, and a guarantee for my caution.

I remember to have read in an ancient writer* of a certain district in Africa remarkable for a fearful phenomenon. "In that climate," says our authority, "the air seemed filled with gigantic figures of strange and uncouth monsters fighting (or in pursuit of) each other. These apparitions were necessarily a little alarming to foreigners, but the natives looked upon them with the utmost indifference." Is not this story an emblem of national prejudices? The shadowy monsters that appal the stranger seem ordinary enough to us; we have no notion of a different atmosphere, and that which is a marvel to others is but a common place to ourselves. Yet if the native be unobservant, your Excellency will allow that the traveller is credulous; and if sometimes the monsters are unremarked by the one, sometimes also they are invented by the other. Your Excellency remembers the story of the French Jesuit, who was astonished to find priestcraft in China; the man who practised it in the name of the Virgin thought it a monstrous piece of impudence to practise it in the name of Fo! In the same spirit of travel you read of an Englishwoman complaining of rudeness in America, and a German prince affecting a republican horror at an aristocracy in England.

* Diodorus Siculus.

His Excellency, Prince Talleyrand, knows better than the whole *corps* of diplomatists how small a difference there is really between man and man—the stature and limbs vary little in proportions—it is the costume that makes all the distinction. Travellers do not sufficiently analyze their surprise at the novelties they see, and they often proclaim that to be a difference in the several characters of nations, which is but a difference in their manners. One of the oldest illustrations of national prejudice is to be found in Herodotus. The Greeks in the habit of *burning* their parents were wonderfully indignant at the barbarity of the Callatii, who were accustomed to *eat* them. The Persian king summons the Callatii before him in the presence of the Greeks:—"You eat your fathers and mothers—a most excellent practice—pray, for what sum will you burn them?" The Callatii were exceedingly disgusted at the question. Burn their parents! They uttered yells of horror at so inhuman a suggestion! The Callatian and the Greek experienced filial affection in an equal degree, but the man who made a dinner of his father, would have considered it the height of atrocity to have made a bonfire of him.

The passions are universally the same—the expression of them as universally varying. Your Excellency will allow that the French and the English are both eminently vain of country—so far they are alike—yet if there be any difference

between the two nations more strong than another, it is the manner in which that vanity is shown. The vanity of the Frenchman consists (as I have somewhere read) in belonging to so great a country: but the vanity of the Englishman exults in the thought that so great a country belongs to himself. The root of all our notions, as of all our laws, is to be found in the sentiment of property. It is *my* wife whom you shall not insult; it is *my* house that you shall not enter; it is *my* country that you shall not traduce; and by a species of ultra-mundane appropriation, it is *my* God whom you shall not blaspheme!

We may observe the different form of the national vanity in the inhabitant of either country by comparing the eulogia which the Frenchman lavishes on France, with the sarcastic despondency with which the Englishman touches upon England.

A few months ago I paid a visit to Paris: I fell in with a French marquis of the Bourbonite politics: he spoke to me of the present state of Paris with tears in his eyes. I thought it best to sympathize and agree with him; my complaisance was displeasing:—he wiped his eyes with the air of a man beginning to take offence. "Nevertheless, sir," quoth he, "our public buildings are superb!" I allowed the fact. "We have made great advances in civilization." There was no disputing the proposition. "Our writers are the

greatest in the world." I was silent. "*Enfin*—what a devil of a climate yours is, in comparison to ours!"

I returned to England, in company with a Frenchman, who had visited us twenty years since, and who was delighted with the improvements he witnessed in London; I introduced him to one of our patriots.—"What a superb street is Regent-street!" cried the Frenchman.

"Pooh, sir, mere lath and plaster!" replied the patriot.

"I wish to hear your debates," said the Frenchman.

"Not worth the trouble, sir," groaned the patriot.

"I shall do homage to your public men."

"Mere twaddlers, I assure you—nothing great now-a-days."

"Well, I am surprised; but, at least, I shall see your authors and men of science."

"Really, sir," answered the patriot, very gravely, "I don't remember that we *have any*."

The polished Frenchman was at a loss for a moment, but recovering himself—"Ah!" said he, taking a pinch of snuff, "but you're a very great nation—very!"

"*That* is quite true," said the Englishman drawing himself up.

The Englishman then is vain of his country! Wherefore? because of the public buildings? he

never enters them.—The laws? he abuses them eternally.—The public men? they are quacks.—The writers? he knows nothing about them. He is vain of his country for an excellent reason—IT PRODUCED HIM.

In his own mind the Englishman is the pivot of all things—the centre of the solar system. Like Virtue herself, he

> "Stands as the sun,
> And all that rolls around him
> Drinks light, and life, and glory, from his aspect."

It is an old maxim enough among us that we possess the sturdy sense of independence; we value ourselves on it;—yet the sense of independence is often but the want of sympathy with others.

There was a certain merchant sojourning at an inn, whom the boots by mistake called betimes in the morning.

"Sir," quoth the boots, "the day 's breaking." The merchant turned round with a grim look—"Let it break," growled he, "it owes *me* nothing!" This anecdote is rather characteristic: it shows the connexion between selfishness and independence. The trait in our character of which I speak, has been often remarked; none, however, have, to my mind, very clearly accounted for it. Your Excellency knows, to be sure, that all the Frenchmen who ever wrote a syllable about us have declared it the result of our haughty consciousness of liberty. But we are better aware now-

a-days than formerly what the real effects of liberty are. The feeling I describe is entirely selfish: the feelings produced by the consciousness of liberty rather run into the wildest extremes of universal philanthropy. Union and fraternity are the favourite cant words of popular power; and unsociability may be the accompaniment, but is certainly not the characteristic, of freedom.

A Frenchman, indeed, has long enjoyed the same security of property, and the same consciousness of liberty, which are the boast of the Englishman; but this advantage has rather tended to widen than concentrate the circle of his affections. In becoming a citizen he has not ceased to mingle with his kind; perhaps, he thinks that to be at once free and unsocial would be a union less characteristic of a civilized, than a savage, condition. But your Excellency has observed, that all amongst us, save those of the highest ranks, live very much alone. Our crowded parties are not society; we assemble all our acquaintance for the pleasure of saying nothing to them. "*Les Anglais,*" says one of your countrymen, "*les Anglais ont une infinité de ces petites usages de convention,—pour se dispenser de parler.*" Our main element is home; and if you believe our sentimentalists, we consider it a wonderful virtue to be unhappy and disagreeable everywhere else. Thus (the consequence is notable) we acquire that habit of attaching an undue importance to our own circle, and viewing with

indifference all the sphere beyond, which proverbially distinguishes the recluse, or the member of a confined coterie. Your Excellency has perhaps conversed with Mr. Owen;—that benevolent man usually visits every foreigner whom he conceives worthy of conversion to parallelogrammatisation; and, since I remember the time when he considered the Duke of Wellington and the Archbishop of Canterbury among the likeliest of his proselytes, it is not out of the range of possibilities that he should imagine he may make an Owenite of the Ex-Bishop of *Autun*. If, by any accident, Mr. Owen is wrong upon that point, he is certainly right in another; he is right when, in order to render philanthropy universal, he proposes that individuals of every community should live in public together—the unsocial life is scarcely prolific of the social virtues.

But if it be not the consciousness of liberty, what causes are they that produce amongst us that passion for the Unsocial, which we dignify with the milder epithet of the Domestic? I apprehend that the main causes are two: the first may be found in our habits of trade; the second, in the long established influence of a very peculiar form of aristocracy.

With respect to the first, I think we may grant, without much difficulty, that it is evidently the nature of Commerce to detach the mind from the pursuit of amusement; fatigued with promiscuous

intercourse during the day, its votaries concentrate their desires of relaxation within their home; at night they want rest rather than amusement: hence we usually find that a certain apathy to amusement, perfectly distinct from mere gravity of disposition, is the characteristic of commercial nations. It is not less observable among the Americans, and the Dutch, than it is among the English; the last indeed have, in their social state, great counterbalances to the commercial spirit. I had the honour of being introduced the other day to a young traveller from Amsterdam. "Have you been to the play since your arrival in London?" was a natural question.

"No, sir, those amusements are very expensive."

"True; but a man so enviably rich as yourself can afford them."

"No, sir," was the austere and philosophic reply, "I can afford the amusement, but *not the habit* of amusement."

A witty countryman of your Excellency's told me that he could win over any Englishman I pleased to select, to accompany him to a masquerade that was to be given at the Opera House. I selected for the experiment a remarkably quiet and decorous father of a family—a merchant. The Frenchman accosted him—"Monsieur never goes to masquerades, I believe."

"Never."

"So I thought. It would be *impossible* to induce you to go."

"Not quite impossible," said the merchant, smiling; "but I am too busy for such entertainments; besides I have a moral scruple."

"Exactly so. I have just bet my friend here three to one that he could not persuade you to go to the masquerade given to-morrow night at the Opera House."

"Three to one!" said the merchant, "those are long odds."

"I will offer *you* the same bet," rejoined the Frenchman gaily, "in guineas, if you please."

"Three to one!—done," cried the Englishman, and he went to the Opera House in order to win his wager; the masquerade in this case had ceased to be an amusement—it had become a commercial speculation!*

But the same class that are indifferent to amusement, are yet fond of show. A spirit of general unsociability is not incompatible with the love of festivals on great occasions, with splendid entertainments, and a luxurious hospitality. Ostenta-

* So, in the United States, a traveller tells us that he observed in the pit of the theatre, two lads of about fifteen years of age, conversing very intently between the acts. Curiosity prompted him to listen to the dialogue. Were they discussing the merits of the play—the genius of the actor—the splendour of the scene? No such thing; they were attempting to calculate the number of spectators, and the consequent profits to the manager.

tion and unsociability are often effects of the same cause; for the spirit of commerce, disdaining to indulge amusement, is proud of displaying wealth; and is even more favourable to the Luxuries, than it is to the Arts.

The second cause of our unsociability is more latent than the first: so far from springing out of our liberty, it arises from the restraints on it; and is the result, not of the haughtiness of a democracy, but the peculiar influences of aristocratic power. This part of my inquiry, which is very important, deserves a chapter to itself.

CHAPTER II.

The effect of the openness of Public Honours to the Plebeian counteracted by the Patrician influences—Mr. Hunt's *bon mot*—Character of Lord Lachrymal—Mistake of the People in their jealousy of the Crown—Causes that distinguish the influence of the English, from that of any other, Aristocracy—The numerous Grades of Society—How created—Spirit of imitation and vying—The Reserve and *Orgueil* of the English traced to their Causes—The Aristocracy operate on Character—Character on Laws—Want of Amusements among the Poor.

THE proverbial penetration of your Excellency has doubtless remarked, that England has long possessed this singular constitution of society—the spirit of democracy in the power of obtaining honours, and the genius of an aristocracy in the method by which they are acquired. The highest offices have been open by law to any man, no matter what his pedigree or his quarterings; but influences, stronger than laws, have determined that it is only through the aid of one portion or the other of the aristocracy that those offices can be obtained. Hence we see daily in high advancement men sprung from the people, who yet never use the power they have acquired in the people's behalf. Nay, it may be observed, even among the lawyers, who owe at least the *first* steps of promo-

tion to their own talents or perseverance, though for the crowning honours they must look to oligarchical favour, that, as in the case of a Scott or a Sugden, the lowest plebeian by birth, has only to be of importance to become the bitterest aristocrat in policy. The road to honours is apparently popular; but each person rising from the herd has endeavoured to restrain the very principle of popularity by which he has risen. So that, while the power of attaining eminent station has been open to all ranks, yet in proportion as that power bore any individual aloft, you might see it purifying itself of all democratic properties, and beautifully melting into that aristocratic atmosphere which it was permitted to attain.—Mr. Hunt, whom your Excellency may perhaps have heard of, as a *Doctrinaire*, in a school once familiar to yourself, had a peculiar faculty of uttering hard truths. "You speak," quoth he, one evening in the House of Commons, "of the mob of demagogues whom the Reform Bill will send to parliament; be not afraid, you have one sure method of curing the wildest of them; choose your man, catch him, place him on the Treasury bench, and be assured you will never hear him accused of being a demagogue again."

Lord Lachrymal (it is classical, and dramatic into the bargain, to speak of the living under feigned names) is a man of plebeian extraction. He has risen through the various grades of the law, and has obtained possession of the highest.

No man calls him *parvenu*—he has confounded himself with the *haute noblesse;* if you were to menace the peers' right of voting by proxy, he would burst into tears. "Good old man," cry the Lords, "how he loves the institutions of his country!" Am I asked why Lord Lachrymal is so much respected by peers—am I asked why they boast of his virtues, and think it wrong to remember its origin?—I would answer that question by another, Why is the swallow considered by the vulgar a bird that should be sacred from injury?—Because it builds under their own eaves! There is a certain class of politicians, and Lord Lachrymal is one of them, who build their fortunes in the roofs of the aristocracy, and obtain, by about an equal merit, an equal sanctity with the swallow.

In nearly all states, it is by being the tool of the great that the lowly rise. People point to the new Sejanus, and cry to their children, "See the effect of merit!"—Alas, it is the effect of servility. In despotic states, the plebeian has even a greater chance of rising than in free. In the East, a common water-carrier to-day is grand vizier to-morrow. In the Roman republic the low-born were less frequently exalted, than they were in the Roman Despotism. So with us—it was the Tories who brought forward the man of low or *mediocre* birth; the Whigs, when they came into power, had only their *grands seigneurs*

to put into office. The old maxim of the political adventurer was invariably this: To rise from the people, take every opportunity to abuse them! What mattered it, then, to the plebeians that one of their number was exalted to the Cabinet? He had risen by opposing their wishes; his very characteristic was that of contempt for his brethren. A nobleman's valet is always supereminently bitter against the *canaille:* a plebeian in high station is usually valet to the whole peerage!

The time has long passed when the English people had any occasion for jealousy against the power of the Crown. Even at the period in which they directed their angry suspicions against the King, it was not to that branch of the legislature that the growing power of corruption was justly to be attributed. From the date of the aristocratic revolution of 1688, the influence of the aristocracy has spread its unseen monopoly over the affairs of state. The king, we hear it said, has the privilege to choose his ministers! Excellent delusion! The aristocracy choose them. The heads of that aristocratic party which is the most powerful *must* come into office, whether the king like it or not. Could the king choose a cabinet out of men unknown to the aristocracy—persons belonging neither to whig nor tory? Assuredly not; the aristocratic party in the two Houses would be in arms. Heavens, what a commotion there would be! Imagine the haughty indigna-

tion of my Lords Grey and Harrowby! What a "prelection" we should receive from Lord Brougham, "deeply meditating these things!" Alas! *the king's* ministry would be out the next day, and the aristocracy's ministry, with all due apology, replaced. The power of the king is but the ceremonial to the power of the magnates. He enjoys the prerogative of seeing two parties fight in the lists, and of crowning the victor. Need I cite examples of this truth? Lord Chatham is the dread and disgust of George III.—the stronger of the two factions for the time being force his majesty into receiving that minister. The Catholic question was the most unpalatable measure that could be pressed upon George IV.—To the irritability of that monarch no more is conceded than was granted to the obstinacy of his royal father, and the Catholic Relief Bill is passed amidst all the notoriety of his repugnance. In fact, your Excellency, who knows so well the juggling with which one party in politics fastens its sins upon another, may readily perceive that the monarch has only been roasting the chestnuts of the aristocracy;* and the aristocracy, cunning

* The nation had begun to perceive this truth, when Burke thought fit once more to blind it. "One of the principal topics," saith he, in his *Thoughts on the Cause of the present Discontents*, "which was then, and has been since much employed by that political school, is an effectual terror of the growth of an aristocratic power, prejudicial to the rights of the

creature, has lately affected to look quite shocked at the quantity of chestnuts roasted.

In a certain savage country that I have read of, there is a chief supposed to be descended from the gods; all the other chiefs pay him the greatest respect; they consult him if they should go to war, or proclaim peace; but it is an understood thing, that he is to be made acquainted with their determination beforehand. His consent is merely the ratification of their decree. But the chiefs, always speaking of his power, conceal their own; and while the popular jealousy is directed to the *seeming* authority, they are enabled quietly to cement and extend the foundations of the *real*. Of a similar nature have been the relations between the English king and the English aristocracy; the often odious policy of the last has been craftily fastened on the first; and the sanctity of a king has been too frequently but the conductor of popular lightning from the more responsible aristocracy.

The supposed total of constitutional power has

Crown, and the balance of the constitution," &c. He goes on to argue, that the influence of the Crown is a danger more imminent than that of the peerage. Although in the same work that brilliant writer declares himself "no friend to the aristocracy," his whole love for liberty was that of an aristocrat. His mind was eminently feudal in its vast and stately mould, and the patrician plausibilities dazzled and attracted him far more than the monarchical. He could have been a rebel more easily than a republican.

always consisted of three divisions; the king, the aristocracy, and the commons: but the aristocracy (until the passing of the Reform Bill), by boroughs in the one house, as by hereditary seats in the other, monopolized the whole of the three divisions. They ousted the people from the commons by a majority of their own delegates; and they forced the king into their measures by the maxim, that his consent to a bill passed through *both* houses could not with safety be withheld. Thus then, in state affairs, the government of the country has been purely that of an aristocracy. Let us now examine the influence which they have exercised in social relations. It is to this, I apprehend, that we must look for those qualities which have distinguished their influence from that of other aristocracies. Without the odium of separate privileges, without the demarcation of feudal rights, the absence of those very prerogatives has been the cause of the long establishment of their power. Their authority has not been visible: held under popular names it has deceived the popular eye;—and deluded by the notion of a Balance of Power, the people did not see that it was one of the proprietors of the power who held the scales and regulated the weights.

The social influence of the aristocracy has been exactly of a character to strengthen their legislative. Instead of keeping themselves aloof from the other classes, and "hedging their state" round

with the thorny, but unsubstantial barriers of heraldic distinctions; instead of demanding half a hundred quarterings with their wives, and galling their inferiors by eternally dwelling on the inferiority, they may be said to mix more largely, and with more seeming equality, with all classes, than any other aristocracy in the savage or civilized world. Drawing their revenues from land, they have also drawn much of their more legitimate* power from the influence it gave them in elections. To increase this influence they have been in the habit of visiting the provinces much more often than any aristocracy in a monarchical state are accustomed to do. Their hospitality, their field sports, the agricultural and county meetings they attend, in order "to keep up the family interest," mix them with all classes; and, possessing the usual urbanity of a court, they have not unfrequently added to the weight of property, and the glitter of station, the influence of a personal popularity, acquired less, perhaps, by the evidence of virtues, than the exercise of politeness.

In most other countries the middle classes rarely possessing the riches of the nobility, have offered to the latter no incentive for seeking their alliance. But wealth is the greatest of all levellers, and the highest of the English nobles

* And yet the power that has been most frequently inveighed against, merely because it was the most evident.

willingly repair the fortunes of hereditary extravagance by intermarriage with the families of the banker, the lawyer, and the merchant: this, be it observed, tends to extend the roots of their influence among the middle classes, which in other countries are the natural barrier of the aristocracy. It is the ambition of the rich trader to obtain the alliance of nobles; and he loves, as well as respects, those honours to which himself or his children may aspire. The long-established custom of purchasing titles, either by hard money or the more circuitous influence of boroughs, has tended also to mix aristocratic feelings with the views of the trader; and the apparent openness of honours to all men makes even the humblest shopkeeper, grown rich, think of sending his son to College, not that he may become a wiser man or a better man, but that he may *perhaps* become my lord bishop or my lord chancellor.

Thus, by not preserving a strict demarcation, as the German nobles, round their order, the English aristocracy extended their moral influence throughout the whole of society, and their state might thus be said, like the city of the Lacedemonians, to be the safer in internal force, from rejecting all vulgar fortifications.

By this intermixture of the highest aristocracy with the more subaltern ranks of society, there are far finer and more numerous grades of dignity in this country than in any other. You see two gen-

tlemen of the same birth, fortune, and estates—they are not of the same rank,—by no means!—one looks down on the other as confessedly his inferior. Would you know why? His *connexions* are much higher! Nor are connexions alone the dispensers of an ideal, but acknowledged consequence. Acquaintanceship confers also its honours: next to being related to the great, is the happiness of knowing the great: and the wife even of a *bourgeois*, who has her house filled with fine people, considers herself, and is tacitly allowed to be, of greater rank than one, who, of far better birth and fortune, is not so diligent a worshipper of birth and fortune in others; in fact, this lady has but her own respectable rank to display—but that lady reflects the exalted rank of every duchess that shines upon her * cardrack.

These mystic, shifting, and various shades of graduation; these shot-silk colours of society produce this effect: That people have no exact and fixed position—that by acquaintance alone they may rise to look down on their superiors—that while the rank gained by intellect, or by interest, is open but to few, the rank that may be obtained

* It may be observed that the power of fashion has increased in proportion as the aristocracy have blended themselves more with the gentry and merchants. There was a time when the English were as remarkable among foreigners for their independence and indifference to the mode, as they are now noted for their servile obsequiousness to fashion.

by fashion seems delusively to be open to all. Hence, in the first place, that eternal vying with each other; that spirit of show; that lust of imitation which characterize our countrymen and countrywomen. These qualities so invariably observed by foreigners have never yet been ascribed to their true origin. I think I have succeeded in tracing their cause as national characteristics to the peculiar nature of our aristocratical influences. As wealth procures the alliance and respect of nobles, wealth is affected even where not possessed; and, as fashion, which is the creature of an aristocracy, can only be obtained by resembling the fashionable; hence, each person imitates his fellow, and hopes to purchase the respectful opinion of others by renouncing the independence of opinion for himself.

And hence, also, proceeds the most noticeable trait in our national character, our reserve, and that *orgueil*, so much more expressive of discontent than of dignity, which is the displeasure, the amazement, and the proverb of our continental visiters. Nobody being really fixed in society, except the *very* great, (in whom, for the most part, the characteristics vanish,) in any advance you make to a seeming equal, you may either lower yourself by an acquaintance utterly devoid of the fictitious advantages which are considered respectable; or, on the other hand, you may subject your pride to the mortification of a rebut from one, who,

for reasons impossible for you to discover, considers his station far more unequivocal than your own. *La Bruyère* observes, that the rank of single men being less settled than that of the married, since they *may* exalt themselves by an alliance, they are usually placed by society in one grade higher than their legitimate claim. Another French writer commenting on this passage has observed, that hence one reason why there is usually less real dignity and more factitious assumption in the single men of polished society, than in the married;—they affect an imaginary situation. With us all classes are the same, as the bachelors of *La Bruyère:* all aim at some ideal situation a grade above their own, and act up to the dignity of this visionary Barataria. The ingenious author of *The Opium Eater* has said, that the family of a bishop are, for the most part, remarkable for their pride. It is because the *family* of a bishop hold an equivocal station, and are for ever fearful that they are not thought enough of: a bishop belongs to the aristocracy, but his family to the gentry. Again, natural sons are proverbial for arrogance and assumption—it is from the same cause. In fact, let us consult ourselves. Are we not all modest when we feel ourselves estimated at what we consider our just value, and all inclined to presume in proportion as we fear we are slighted?

In all other countries where an aristocracy is or

has been exceedingly powerful, the distinctions they have drawn between themselves and society have been marked and stern; they have chiefly lived, married, and visited among their own appointed circle. In Germany the count of eighty quarterings does not fear a rivalry with the baron of six; nor does the baron of six quarterings dread the aspiring equality of the merchant or the trader; each rank is settled in its own stubborn circumvallation: fashion in Germany is, therefore, comparatively nugatory in its influence; there is no object in vying, and no reward in imitation. With us the fusion of all classes, each with the other, is so general, that the aristocratic contagion extends from the highest towards the verge of the lowest. The tradesmen in every country town have a fashion of their own, and the wife of the mercer will stigmatize the lady of the grocer as "ungenteel." When Mr. Cobbett, so felicitous in nicknames, and so liberal in opinions, wished to assail Mr. Sadler, he found no epithet so suitable to his views or sentiments as the disdainful appellation of "*linendraper!*" The same pride and the same reserve will be found everywhere; and thus slowly and surely, from the petty droppings of the well of manners, the fossilized incrustations of national character are formed.

To the importance which wealth receives from the aristocracy we must add the importance it receives from trade. What men are taught to

respect, gradually acquires the distinction of a virtue—to be rich, becomes a merit; to be poor, an offence. A foreign writer has thus justly observed, that we may judge of the moral influence of this country by the simple phrase, that a man is *worth* so much; his worthiness being derived from his income, and proportioned to its amount.

In a work upon England, published at Paris in 1816, which has stolen much from the more important one of M. Ferri de St. Constant; but which, while often wrong in its facts, is, *when* right in them, usually profound in its deductions, the writer, after observing that in England, *l'argent décide en tout*, philosophically remarks—"*De cette manière, quoique les richesses augmentent à certains égards la puissance d'un état, il arrive qu'elles ne servent qu'à le détruire sitôt qu'elles influent sur le choix de ceux qui sont à la tête du gouvernement.*"

In other countries poverty is a misfortune,—with us it is a crime.

The familiar meaning of a word often betrays the character of a people: with the ancient Romans virtue signified valour; with the modern, a virtuoso is a collector. The inhabitants of the Tonga Islands, with whom all morals are in a state of extraordinary confusion, have no expression for virtue in a man which is not equally applicable to axe: they recognise virtue only in what does *them* an evident service. An axe or a man may be the

instrument of murder, but each continues to be a good axe or a good man. With us the word *virtue* is seldom heard out of a moral essay; I am not sure whether it does not excite a suspicion of some unorthodox signification, something heathen and in contradistinction to religion. The favourite word is "respectability"—and the current meaning of "respectability" may certainly exclude virtue, but never a decent sufficiency of wealth: no wonder then that every man strives to be rich—

"Et propter vitam vivendi perdere causas."

Through the effects they thus produce on the national character, the aristocracy have insensibly been able to react upon the laws. Poverty being associated in men's minds with something disreputable, they have had little scruple in making laws unfavourable to the poor! they have clung without shame to the severities of a barbarous criminal code—to an unequal system of civil law, which almost proscribes justice but to the wealthy—to impressment for seamen—to taxes upon knowledge—and to imprisonment by mesne process. Such consequences may be traced to such levities. The Laws of a Nation are often the terrible punishment of their foibles.

Hence also arises one of the causes* for the

* One of the causes. Another is in the growth of religious sectarianism; but I am apt to believe, that if amusements were

noticeable want of amusement for the poorer classes. Where are the cheap *guinguettes* and gardens for the labourer, which make the boast of France? Where the consecrated greensward, formerly the theme of our own poets,

> "Where all the village train, from labour free,
> Leap up their sports beneath the hawthorn tree?"

We are told that the Arcadians, as their climate was peculiarly chill and gloomy (in modern phrase "English"), sought to counteract its influence by assemblies, music, and a gay and cheerful education. Thus did legislation conquer nature; nor with unhappy effects, for the Arcadians were no less remarkable for their benevolence and piety than for their passion for music and for their gaiety of disposition.* It is reserved for us to counteract the gloomiest climate by the dullest customs!

I do not say, however, that direct legislation should provide amusement for the poor—but at least it should never forbid it. The very essence of our laws has been against the social meetings of the humble, which have been called idleness, and against the amusements of the poor, which have been stigmatized as disorder.† But what

within the reach of the poor, there would be far less of the gloom of fanaticism. Excitement of one sort or the other must be sought for, as a counterpoise to toil; at present the poor find it only in two sources—the conventicle or the alehouse.

* Polybius.

† A few half-sighted politicians, like Windham, have indeed

direct legislation itself cannot effect, could be effected by the spirit by which legislation is formed. That prejudice of respect for the wealthy, and contempt for the poor, which belongs to us, would probably soon close any institutions for popular amusements if established to-morrow; if they were cheap they would be considered disreputable. In France, the humbler shopkeepers mix in festivity with the peasantry; the aristocratic spirit would forbid this condescension in England (unless an election were going on), and the relaxation being thus ungraced by the presence of those a little their superiors would perhaps be despised by the labourers themselves.*

It were to be wished on many accounts that this were otherwise; amusement keeps men cheerful and contented—it engenders a spirit of urbanity—it reconciles the poor to the pleasures of their superiors which are of the same sort, though in another sphere; it removes the sense of hardship—it brings men together in those genial moments

advocated popular amusements, but of what nature?—Bull-baiting and boxing: amusements that brutalize. These are they who turn the people into swine, and then boast of their kindness in teaching them to be savage. Admirable philanthropists! the object of recreation is to soften and refine men, not to render them more ferocious.

* They might be licentious from the same cause. In France the amusements of the peasantry are so decently conducted, because the presence of some of the middle class produces an unconscious, but most salutary restraint.

when the heart opens and care is forgotten. Deprived of more gentle relaxations, the poor are driven to the alehouse, they talk over their superiors—and who ever talks of others in order to praise them? they read the only cheap papers permitted them, not usually the most considerate and mild in spirit;—their minds in one respect are benefited; for they advance, even by this intercourse, in their progress to better government; but they clog this benefit by a rancour to all its obstacles, which is at once natural and to be lamented.* Woe to the legislator who succeeds by vexatious laws and petty tyrannies, in interdicting enjoyment to those who labour!—above all, in an age when they have discovered what is due to themselves; he will, indeed, expedite reform—if that to legislators be an agreeable contemplation—but it will be by souring and exacerbating the spirit which extorts it!

* All passion blinds even the best-founded opinions. A passionate indignation against the aristocracy would, if once put in action, frustrate the good objects it sought to effect. The great Marius saw all the vices of the aristocracy with the wrath of a wronged plebeian. Marius was the Incarnation of Popular Passion—he scourged the Patricians for their disorders, by committing more tumultuous and deadly disorders himself.

CHAPTER III.

Story of a Chinese Emperor—Applied to this work—Dislike to Foreigners, how caused—Abatement of the dislike—One cause, however, still continues—Anecdote of a Russian, and his two visits to England—National Honesty and national Honour—English Generosity—Rather a characteristic of the People than the Nobles—Chivalry, the attribute more of the former than the latter—Illustrative Anecdotes—Regard for Character—Its consequences over-rated, wherefore?—Common Sense *not* a characteristic of the highest and the lowest Classes—Causes and Effects of that common sense among the middle class—The accusation of the Ferocity of the English refuted—Propensity to Suicide *not* a distinction of the English—The vitality of Absurdities illustrated by the story of Archimedes—National Spirit of Industry—The last Adventure of Micromegus.

THERE is a tale (your Excellency may have read it, it is to be found in the writings of a French missionary—a species of literature that must have manifold attractions for one who was once Bishop of Autun)—there is a tale of a certain Chinese emperor, who conceived great displeasure at the grand historian of the Celestial Empire, for having with too accurate and simple a fidelity, narrated in his chronicle all the errors and foibles of the prince. "I admire your effrontery," said the emperor frowning: "You dare then to keep a diary of my offences for the benefit of posterity?"

"Yes!" said the historian boldly, "I put down faithfully all that can convey to a later age a just impression of your character; accordingly, the instant your majesty dismisses me, I shall hasten to insert in my chronicle the threats and the complaints that you have made me for telling the truth."

The emperor was startled, but the Chinese have long been in the habit of enjoying very sensible monarchs—"Go," said he, after a short pause and with a frank smile, "Go, write down all you please; henceforth I will strive at least that Posterity shall have little to blame in me."

Upon the principle on which the historian wrote of the sovereign, I now write of the people. Will they be indignant at my honesty in painting their foibles? No, they will not be less generous nor less wise than the Emperor of China;—if they are, I shall avenge myself like my model, by a supplement, containing their reproaches! I do not, like the herd of fault-finders, declaim vaguely on the faults of the people, I attempt in honesty, if in error, to trace their causes. This is the first time in which, in a detailed and connected shape, the attempt has been made; the best way to find remedies for a disease is to begin by ascertaining its origin.

I think your Excellency must have perceived, since your first visit to England, there has been a great change from what formerly was a strong na-

tional characteristic;—*We no longer hate the French.* We have a greater sympathy with, than an aversion to, foreigners in general. We have enlarged the boundaries of patriotism, and are becoming Citizens of the World. Our ancient dislike to foreigners was not a vague and ignorant prejudice alone, nor was it solely the growth of an insular situation in the map of the globe; it was a legacy which was bequeathed to us by our history. The ancient record of our empire is a series of foreign conquests over the natives. The Roman, the Saxon, the Dane, the Norman, successively taught to the indigenous inhabitant a tolerably well-founded antipathy to foreigners. When the soreness of a conquered people wore off, the feeling was kept alive by the jealousy of a commercial one. Foreigners settled amongst us as traders; and the industry of the Flemish monopolized for centuries, to the great disgust of the natives, a considerable portion of our domestic manufactures. National dislikes, once formed, are slow of conversion; and a jealousy of foreigners, conceived with some cause by our forefathers, was easily retained, when the cause had ceased to exist. Our warlike aristocracy found it indeed expedient to keep alive so pugnacious a characteristic: and Nelson thought the best mode of conquering the French was seriously to inculcate, as a virtue, the necessity of detesting them. This settled hatred to our neighbours began, however, to break up

from its solid surface at the close of the last century. The beginning of the French revolution—an event which your Excellency has probably forgotten—taught the more liberal of our populace that the French had no inherent desire to be slaves; they began to feel an union with their neighbours, from the common sentiment of liberty. The excesses of the Revolution checked the nascent charity, or at least confined it to the few; and a horror of the crimes of the French superseded a sympathy with their struggles. Still the surface of national antipathy was broken up; a party was formed to praise your countrymen, in opposition to the party that reviled them. By degrees the general principles of the first party came more into vogue than those of the last; and among those principles, a better estimation of the characters of foreign nations. The peace, of course, bringing us into more actual connexion with the Continent, has strengthened the kindly sentiment: and, finally, your last Revolution has removed all trace of the fearful impression left upon us by the first. On the whole, therefore, a hatred of foreigners has ceased to distinguish us; and, of the two extremes, we must guard rather against a desire of imitating our neighbours, than a horror of resembling.

To be sure, however, our toleration of foreigners is more catholic than individual. We suspect them a little when some half a dozen of them in

braided coats and mustachios pay us a midsummer visit; a respectable lodging-house keeper would rather be excused letting them apartments. They are driven, like the Jews of old, to a settled quarter, abandoned by the rest of the world; they domicile together in a dingy spot, surrounded by alleys and courts: you may see them matutinally emerging from the desolate gloom of Leicester-square, which is a sort of Petty France in itself, and where they have established a colony of hostels. But assuredly the unoffending frigidity, evinced to them in less familiar regions, is the result of no unhandsome prejudice. We do not think them, as we once did, *inherently*, but *unfortunately*, guilty!—in a word, we suspect them of being *poor*. They strike us with the unprepossessing air of the shabby genteel. Mrs. Smith is sorry her first floor is engaged—not because she thinks the foreign gentleman may cut her throat, but because she fears he may forget to pay his rent. She apprehends that he can scarcely give the "respectable reference" that she demands, for the use of her goods and chattels. Foreigners remark this suspicion, and not guessing the cause, do us injustice by supposing it is solely directed against them. No such thing; it is directed against Poverty ubiquitously; it is the abstract quality, not the material man, that excites in the Smithian breast the sentiment of distrust. Our hostess would be equally lukewarm to any Englishman she con-

sidered equivocally poor;—in short, it is a commercial, not a national apprehension. A rich foreigner, as your Excellency well knows, with huge arms on his carriage, half a dozen valets, and a fur great-coat, is sure to be obsequiously treated enough. Hence the wealthy visiter from the Continent usually avers that we are a most civil people to foreigners; and the needy one declares that we are exactly the reverse. I hope that what I have said on this point will right us with our neighbours; and assure them that the only stories which we now believe to the practical inconvenience of Monsieur, are those which accuse him of living on a hundred Napoleons a-year, pocketing the sugar at his coffee, and giving the waiter something under a penny half-penny!

A Russian of my acquaintance visited England, with a small portmanteau, about two years ago. Good heavens! how he abused us!—never was so rude, cruel, suspicious, barbaric a people! I saw him a few months since, having just paid us a second visit: he was in raptures with all he saw; never was a people so improved; his table was crowded with cards—how hospitable we were! The master of the hotel had displaced an English family to accommodate him; what a refined consideration for a stranger! Whence rose this difference in the Russian's estimate of us? His uncle was dead, he had come into a great property. In neither case had our good people looked at the

forcigner; they had looked the first time at the small portmanteau, and the second time at the three carriages and four!

But if the commercial spirit makes us attach undue importance to wealth, it keeps alive also a spirit of honesty as the best means to acquire it. Thus the same causes that produce our defects, conspire to produce many of our merits. The effect of commerce is to make men trustworthy in their ordinary dealings and their social relations. It does this, not by the sense of virtue, but that of self-interest. A trader soon discovers that honesty is the best policy. If you travel through Italy, and your carriage break down, there is perhaps but one smith in the place; he repairs your carriage at ten times the value of the labour; he takes advantage of your condition and his own monopoly of the trade. Whoever has had the misfortune to make the tour of the Netherlands in a crazy *calèche*, can speak from ample experience of the similar extortion practised also in that country, where the standard of morality is much higher than in Italy. This would rarely, if ever, be the case in England. There might be no other smith in the village for you to apply to, but there would be a public spirit, a common conscience in the village, which would insensibly deter the monopolist from acting towards you dishonestly. To this we must, to be sure, add the consideration, that population being more

dense in this Country, the monopoly is more rare, and the temptation less frequent.

It is the property of an enlightened aristocracy —I mean one that is comparatively enlightened— to foster the sentiments of honour. Honour is their creed; they sacrifice even virtues to a single one of its prejudices. Thus, in our relations with foreign states, we have been less wise than honourable: and we have sustained our national character, by paying with rigid punctuality the national loans.

Rogues among traders, and swindlers among gentlemen, there are in this, as in all countries; but they do not suffice to stamp the character of the People. There is no systematic mockery of principle with us—nor that sort of *maison de jeu* morality, which you find among the philosophical *élégans* of Paris and of Vienna. A fine gentleman in London is a formidable person to young heirs; but of these fine gentlemen, thank Heaven, there are not above a dozen or two. In private character, as in the national, an English patrician is rather the dupe than the deceiver:—at least, he keeps his deceits for his parliamentary career.

The English are also an eminently generous people. I do not mean generous in the vulgar signification of the epithet, though that they would deserve, if but from the ostentatious and artificial spirit I have already described—but the

loftier and more moral one. Their sympathies are generous; they feel for the persecuted, and their love is for the fallen.

But it is mainly *the People*, (properly so speaking,) the mass—the majority that generosity characterizes; nor do I trace this virtue to the aristocratic influences: among the aristocracy it is not commonly found. As little, perhaps, is to be traced to the influences of trade; it is rather connected with our history and our writers—and may be considered a remnant of the chivalric spirit which departed from the nobles ere it decreased among the people. It is the multitude who preserve longest the spirit of antiquity—the aristocracy preserve only the forms.

Let us recall for a moment the trial of Queen Caroline: in my own mind, and in the minds of the majority of the public, she was guilty of the crime imputed to her. Be it so; but the people sympathized, not with the crime, but the persecution. They saw a man pampered in every species of indulgence, and repudiating his wife in the first instance without assignable cause; allowing her full licence for conduct if she consented to remain abroad, and forbore to cross the line of his imperial Sybaritism of existence; but arming against her all the humiliations, and all the terrors of law, the instant she appeared in England, and interfered with the jealous monopoly of royal solemnities. They saw at once that this was the

course of conduct natural rather to a man of passion than to one of honour: to a man of honour disgrace to his name would have seemed equally punishable whether perpetrated in Italy or in England. The queen ceased to be the defendant in a court of law, and seemed to the public the victim of a system of oppression. The zeal with which the lower orders supported her, was the zeal of Chivalry; the spirit which Burke invoked in vain from a debased nobility, leaped at once into life among a generous people. Compare the subservient and smothered disgust of the aristocracy with the loud indignation of the people;—which was the more indicative of the nobler emotions, or which preserved in the higher shape our national characteristic of generosity? Who are they that feel the most deeply for the negro slave—the people, or the nobles? The people. Who attend the meetings in behalf of Poland? the aristocracy?—some two or three of them, indeed, for the vanity of uttering orations; but it is the people who fill the assembly. The people may be right, or they may be wrong, in their zeal for either cause, but it is at least the zeal of generosity.

Poverty,—crime itself,—does not blunt this noble characteristic. In some of the workhouses the overseers devised a method to punish the refractory paupers by taking away from them the comforts permitted to the rest; the rest, out of their own slender pittance, supplied their com-

panions! In his work upon prisons, Mr. Buxton informs us, that in the gaol of Bristol the allowance of bread to criminals was below the ordinary modicum necessary for subsistence; to the debtor *no* allowance, however, was made, their friends, or the charity of strangers, supported them: there have been times when these resources have failed, and some of the debtors would have literally perished for want, but that they were delivered—how? by the generosity of the criminals themselves, who voluntarily shared with them at once the food and the distress!

In the last election I remember to have heard a tory orator, opposed to the emancipation of the West Indian slaves, take advantage of the popular cry for economy, and the general impatience under taxation, and assure his audience, all composed of the labouring part of the population, that to attempt to release the slaves would be to increase the army, and consequently, the national burdens: the orator on the other side of the question, instead of refuting this assertion, was contented to grant it. "Be it so," he said; "suppose that your burdens are augmented—suppose that another shilling is monthly, or even weekly, wrung from your hard earnings—suppose all this, and I yet put it to you, whether, crippled and bowed down as you are by taxation, you would not cheerfully contribute your mite to the overthrow of slavery, though in so distant a clime—though

borne by men of a different colour from yourselves, rather than even escape your burdens, grievous though they be, and know that that human suffering still exists, which you, by a self-sacrifice of your own, had the power to prevent?" The meeting rang with applause; the appeal was to generous emotions: had the generosity not been there, the appeal would have been unavailing.

It is, indeed, in popular elections, that a foreigner can alone fully learn the generous character of the English people—what threats they brave, what custom they lose, what profits they surrender, in order to act up to a motive of conscience, or a principle of honour. Could you be made aware of the frequent moral exaltation of the Constituent, your Excellency would be astonished to see the Representative so often an apostate.

Thus, then, generosity is the character of the nation; but the character rather of the people than of the nobles; and while a certain school of theorists maintain that the chief good of an aristocracy is to foster that noble quality, they advance an argument which is so easily refuted as to endanger the cause it would support.

Your Excellency, if I mistake not, is tolerably well acquainted with the weaker side of Madame de Staël, and have, doubtless, in your experience of the courtly circles of England, seen whether their "moral air" be entitled to all the panegyrics

it received from that ingenious Architect on Hypotheses. A regard for character is a quality on which we value ourselves justly; yet it scarcely, perhaps, produces those excellent effects on morality which ought to be its offspring. The reason is possibly this: we defer, it is true, to what we consider to be a good character; but it very often happens that our notions of the elements of a good character are any thing but just. We sometimes venerate a Saint where your Excellency would recognise a Mawworm. In the first place, as regards public character, that character has usually been considered the best, which adopts the principles most *à la mode*. Now the aristocracy influence the mode, and the best character, therefore, has been usually given to the strongest supporter of the aristocrats: the people not being educated, at least politically, and judging not for themselves, have formed their opinion from the very classes interested against them, maligned their friends, and wept tears of gratitude for the consistency of their foes. Mr. Thelwall advocated reform; and Mr. Canning informs us, that he was pelted as he went:—*

* "Thelwall and ye, that lecture as ye go,
And for your pains get pelted," &c.

It is curious enough to observe, that while, when Tory principles were the mode—your Liberal was considered the immoral man—and the Tory was the high model of public excellence; so now, when the Liberal Party are in fashion, the same Tory is

Another fault in our judgment of public men has been, that we have confounded too often a private sobriety of life with political respectability. If a gentleman walked betimes in the park, with his seven children and a very ugly wife, the regularity of such conduct stamps him as an unexceptionable politician. Your Excellency remembers Lord Mediocre So-so—he was a cabinet minister. He ordained a vast number of taxes, and never passed one popular law; but then he was very domestic, and the same coldness of constitution that denied him genius, preserved him from vice. He was a most pernicious statesman; but he bore the highest of characters. His very frigidity made him considered 'a *safe politician*;' for we often seem to imagine that the property of the mind resembles the property of sea water, and loses all its deleterious particles when once it is fairly frozen.

Sometimes in those visions of public virtue, which your Excellency knows all men now and then conceive—in their closet; I have fancied that public character should be proportioned only to public benefits; that the statesman should be weighed in a balance, where the laws he has

considered the basest of beings—a creature that has fattened upon the agonies of the Public—his very loyalty, once his virtue, now his vice—and his attachment to Church and State, formerly the proof of his religion, now merely the evidence that he has some corrupt object to further by the alliance.

assisted to frame should be thrown into the opposite scale; and that the light of his private amiabilities should, instead of casting into shade his public character, be lost to the general eye in the wide blaze of universal utility.

At present, or at least until very lately,

> Whene'er of statesmen we complain,
> They cry, 'Why raise this vulgar strife so?
> 'Tis true, that tax too hard may strain;
> But then——his Lordship loves his wife so!
> That law, indeed, may gall ye rather;
> But then——his Lordship 's such a father!'

I have observed, in a former chapter, that the undue regard for wealth produces a false moral standard; that respectability is the favourite word of eulogium with us, as virtue was with the ancients; and that a man may be respectable, without being entitled from his virtues to respect. Hence it follows, that a regard for character may often be nothing but the regard of popular prejudices; and that, though a virtue in itself, it may neither be directed to, or productive of, virtues in others. Still this characteristic is a great and noble superstructure to build upon:—it is those nations who are indifferent to moral distinctions of whom Improvement may despair. A People who respect what they consider good, sooner or later discover in what good really consists. Indifference to moral character is a vice; a misunderstanding of its true components is but an error. Fortunately, the attention of our country-

men is now turned towards themselves; the spirit of *self*-examination is aroused; they laugh at the hyperbolical egotisms in which they formerly indulged; they do not take their opinions of their own excellence from ballad-singers, any more than their sentiments on the goodness of their Constitution from the common-places of Tories. "Impostors," said the acute Shaftesbury, "naturally speak the best of human nature, that they may the more easily abuse it." The Imperial Tyrant of the Roman Senate always talked of the virtues of the senators.

But men now think for themselves. That blind submission to teachers, which belongs to the youth of Opinion, is substituted for bold examination in its maturity; and the task of the latter period is too often to unlearn the prejudices acquired in the first. When men begin to think for themselves, they will soon purify in the process of thought the errors they imbibed from others. To the boldness of the once abused and persecuted Paulicians, in judging themselves of the Gospel, we owe that spirit which, though it suffered with Huss and Wickliffe, triumphed with Zuinglius and Luther. The scanty congregations of Armenia and Cappadocia were characterized by the desire to think freely—they have been the unacknowledged authors of *this very era*, when men begin to think rightly. The agitation of Thought is the beginning of Truth.

If the effect of our regard for character has been a little overrated, so I apprehend that the diplomatist of a thousand cabinets must sometimes have smiled at the exaggerated estimate which we form of our Common Sense. It is that property upon which we the most value ourselves; and every statesman, whether he propose to pass a bill for English reform, or for Irish coercion, always trusts the consequences "to the known good sense of the British community." Let us put on our spectacles, and examine this attribute.

The "common sense" of the ancient stoics was the sense of the *common* interest; the common sense of the modern schools is the sense of *one's own!* All traders are very much alive to this peculiar faculty—the Dutch, the Americans, as well as the English: it is, indeed, an inevitable consequence of the habit of making bargains; but, I think, on inquiry, we shall see that it belongs not so much to the whole nation as to the trading part of it.

That common sense, the practice of which is a sober and provident conduct, is, I fear, only visible amongst our middle classes in their domestic relations. It is possessed neither by the aristocracy nor the poor; least of all in *foreign relations* has it hitherto been our characteristic.

Like the nobility of other civilized countries,

our own are more remarkable for an extravagant recklessness of money, for an impatient ardour for frivolities, for a headlong passion for the caprices, the debaucheries, the absurdities of the day, than for any of those prudent and considerate virtues which are the offspring of common sense. How few estates that are not deeply mortgaged! The Jews and the merchants have their grasp on more than three parts of the property of the peerage. Does this look like common sense? But these excesses have been carried to a greater height with *our* aristocracy than with any other, partly because of their larger command of wealth, principally because they, being brought, like the rest of the world, under the control of fashion, have not, like the ancient sieurs of France, or the great names of Germany, drawn sufficient consequence from their own birth to require no further distinctions. Our nobles have had ambition, that last infirmity of noble minds, and they have been accordingly accustomed to vie with each other in those singular phantasies of daring vulgarity with which a head without culture amuses an idleness without dignity. Hence, while we have boasted of our common sense, we have sent our young noblemen over the world to keep up that enviable reputation by the most elaborate eccentricities; and, valuing ourselves on our prudence, we have only been known to the Continent by our extravagance. Nor is this all: those who might have

been pardonable as stray specimens of erratic imbecility, we have formally enrolled as the diplomatic representatives of the nation:—the oligarchical system of choosing all men to high office, not according to their fitness for the place, but according to their connexion with the party uppermost, has made our very ambassadors frequently seem the delegates from our *maisons des fous;* and the envoy of the British nation at the imperial court of Metternich and craft, was no less a person than the present Marquis of Londonderry.*

If in society, if abroad, if in our diplomatic relations, our common sense, our exquisite shrewdness, our sterling solidity, are not visibly represented by our aristocracy, they are still less represented by them in our political relations. If we look to the progress of the Reform Bill through the Lords, we shall see the most lamentable want of discretion, the most singular absence of common sense. The peers did not think the Reform Bill necessary; accordingly, they rejected it. Sensible men never do a bold thing without being prepared for its consequences. Were the peers prepared? No!—they expressed the greatest astonishment at

* This noble lord is only worse, because more noisy, than his brethren of the *corps diplomatique*. Look over the whole list: how rarely you can, by an extraordinary accident, discover a man not below par! Sir Frederick Lamb is a superficial man of pleasure, and yet he is the cleverest of all.

Lord Grey's going out of office, after his declaring repeatedly, that he would do so if they rejected his proposition; and the greatest consternation at the resolution of the people to get the Bill, after their expressing that resolution uninterruptedly for nearly two years. Taken by surprise, they therefore received the Bill again, and, after refusing to conciliate the people, voluntarily placed themselves in the condition of being beat by the people. Sensible men make a virtue of necessity. The peers put themselves in the condition of granting the necessity, and losing all virtue in the grant. They paraded their weakness up and down—placed it in the most ostentatious situation, and with all the evils of concession, insisted on uniting all the odium of resistance. This might be very fine, but your Excellency need not think twice to allow that it was not very sensible.

Let us now look at our Poor. Where is their common sense? Alas! what imprudence!—Early marriages; many children; poor-rates, and the workhouse—see the history of the agricultural labourers! Of them, indeed, it may be said, in those words in which an eastern writer asserts that the chronicle of the whole Human Race is found—"They are born; they are wretched; they die." In no foreign country, even of far less civilization than England, is there the same improvidence. In France, where there is a much greater inclination

to pleasure, there is yet a much more vigorous disposition to save. The French peasants never incur the *wicked*, because voluntary, calamity of bringing children into the world whom they cannot feed; the youngest a new robber of the pittance of the eldest; brother the worst foe to brother, and each addition to the natural ties bringing nearer and more near the short and ghastly interval between Penury and Famine, Despair and Crime: nor do they—no, nor the peasants of Spain, of Germany, of Italy, of Holland—squander in the selfish vices of an hour, the produce of a week's toil. The Continental peasant is not selfish in his pleasure; he shares his holiday with his family, and, not being selfish, he is not improvident: his family make *him* prudent—the same cause often makes the Englishman desperate.

In an account of Manchester, lately published, what a picture of the improvidence of the working classes!

"Instructed in the fatal secret of subsisting on what is barely necessary to life—yielding partly to necessity, and partly to example—the labouring classes have ceased to entertain a laudable pride in furnishing their houses, and in multiplying the decent comforts which minister to happiness. What is superfluous to the mere exigencies of nature, is too often expended at the tavern; and for the provision of old age and infirmity, they too frequently trust either to charity, to the support of

their children, or to the protection of the poor laws."

* * * * *

"The artisan too seldom possesses sufficient moral dignity or intellectual or organic strength to resist the seductions of appetite. His wife and children, subjected to the same process, have little power to cheer his remaining moments of leisure. Domestic economy is neglected, domestic comforts are too frequently unknown. A meal of coarse food is hastily prepared, and devoured with precipitation. Home has little other relation to him than that of shelter—few pleasures are there—it chiefly presents to him a scene of physical exhaustion, from which he is glad to escape. His house is ill furnished, uncleanly, often ill ventilated—perhaps damp; his food, from want of forethought and domestic economy, is meagre and innutritious; he generally becomes debilitated and hypochondriacal, and unless supported by principle, falls the victim of dissipation."

* * * * *

"Some idea may be formed of the influence of these establishments (gin-shops, &c.) on the health and morals of the people, from the following statement; for which we are indebted to Mr. Braidley, the borough-reeve of Manchester. He observed the number of persons entering a gin-shop in five minutes, during eight successive Saturday evenings, and at various periods from seven o'clock

until ten. *The average result was,* 112 *men and* 163 *women, or* 275 *in forty minutes, which is equal to* 412 *per hour.*"*

Whenever a class of the people are inclined to habitual inebriety, it is evidently absurd to attribute to them the characteristic of that clear and unclouded faculty which we call common sense. It may be enough, therefore, of proof that the English poor are *not* distinguished above their equals on the Continent for their claim to common sense, to point to the notorious fact, that they *are* so distinguished for their addiction to inebriety.

But if this faculty does not characterize the two extremes of society, it certainly characterizes the medium? Granted:—but, even here, I suspect our interested panegyrists have been "praising us that they might the more easily impose." In fact, what they meant by common sense was, our general indifference to political theories; our quiet and respectable adherence to the things that are. I fear in the eyes of these, our flatterers, we are somewhat fallen of late. But yet this propensity has for centuries assuredly distinguished us: we have been very little alive to all speculative innovations in morals and in politics. Those Continental writings that have set the rest of the world in a blaze, have never been widely popular with us. Voltaire, Rousseau, Diderot, have been received

* Kay's Manchester.

with suspicion, and dismissed without examination: they were known to be innovators, and that was enough to revolt

"Our sober certainty of waking bliss."

Even Paine, the most plausible and attractive of all popular theorists, was scarcely known to any classes but the lowest, at the moment when the government suddenly thought fit to toss him into celebrity on the horns of a prosecution. Godwin, Harrington, Sydney, how little we know of their writings! A political speculator presents nothing interesting to us, unless we behead him: even then he travels down to posterity, merely on the festive brevity of a toast. We would fight for the cause for which Sydney bled on the scaffold, but we would not for the life and soul of us read a single chapter of the book in which he informs us what the cause *was*. Through a long life the great Bentham struggled against the neglect of the British public—in vain he was consulted by foreign states—in vain he was extolled by philosophers, and pillaged by lawyers. He was an innovator, who wrote against received customs of thinking, and that was sufficient to prevent his being read. Even now, when so many quote his name as if they had his works by heart, how few have ever opened them. The limited sale of the wittiest of all his books, is a melancholy proof of our indifference to theories;

and the 'Popular Fallacies' are a proof of the unpopularity of truths.

The indifference to theory is certainly a proof of what is ordinarily termed common sense; but it obviously has its disadvantages. It is customary for writers of a certain school to say that all truths *ought* to make their way slowly: this is praising mankind for their greatest fault, and elevating apathy into virtue. Hence, in this country, that absurd deference to what is called "practical men," that is to say, men who, belonging to some particular calling, are imbued with all the narrow views and selfish interests that belong to it. If you want a reform on the stage, you would be told that the best performers are the most practical men, they have all an interest in the monopoly they enjoy; poor Kean, accordingly, said before the Committee of the House of Commons that he heard the voice, and saw the play of countenance, as well at the back of the centre boxes at Covent Garden, as in the side boxes of the Haymarket. Mr. Kean's answer is the type of most answers, on whatsoever point, that you extort from practical men in opposition to thinking men; they reason according to their interests: practical men are prejudiced men; usually knowing the details of their own business well, they are astonished at the presumption of men who think to improve the principle. These are like the writing-master who would not believe Newton was a great mathe-

matician—"He!—pooh!—he is an hour over a sum in the Rule of Three!" This unbeliever was a practical man, who could not understand the theory that mastered worlds and hesitated over the multiplication table.

The emperor Julian, whose mind was peculiarly adapted to the notions of the present age in all things but his levity in religion, and his solemnity in slovenliness, says very well upon this head, "that a man who derives experience from his own habits, rather than the principles of some great theory, is like an empiric, who, by practice, may cure one or two diseases with which he is familiar, but having no system, or theory of art, must necessarily be ignorant of all the innumerable complaints which have not fallen under his personal observation."

The practical man is one who should give you all his facts, and never reason upon them; unfortunately the English take his reasonings even more willingly than his facts, and thus, according to Julian, under the notion of avoiding quackery, they have, in their legislative changes, been peculiarly the victims of quacks.*

* Those were practical men who resisted the theory of Mr. Arkwright's machine, under pretence of throwing the poor out of employ;—those were practical men who, being wig-makers, petitioned George III. to cut off his hair and wear a peruke, in order to set the fashion of wigs. Imagine the contemptuous scorn with which the honest wig-makers must have regarded a theorist opposed to wigs.

I think we shall discover a principal cause of our indifference to violent political speculation, and our content with "the ills that are,"—which qualities are termed common sense,—in that Pecuniary system of Credit, which is so universally carried on among the middle classes of England. People are afraid of every shock of opinion, because it is a shock on their credit. Quiet times are good for all trade, but agitated times are death to a man with a host of alarmed creditors. This makes the middle class, especially in London, a solid and compact body against such changes as seem only experiment, and they are generally pushed on by the working classes, before they stir much themselves in the question of even necessary reforms. It is from the fear of a concussion with persons without property, that people with property hazard voluntarily a change.

The habits of a commercial life, also, drain off the enterprise of the mind by the speculations which belong to commerce; and the first thing a trader asks himself in a change is, "How will this affect my returns?" He is therefore always zealous for a reduction of taxes, but he is not very eager about law taxes, unless he has a suit;—and he is more anxious to cut down the pension list than to ameliorate the criminal code.

The great legislative good of admitting the poor to vote is this: It is from the poorer classes that the evils and the dangers of a state arise; *their* crimes are *our* punishments; therefore it is

well, even on selfish principles of government, that they, sensible to their own grievances, should choose those who will work for their redress: As *they* carry an election in a populous town, so they force their opinions relating to their own condition on the middle class, and the middle class on the Representative. Thus the same vote which relieves the Poor protects the state, and the Reform which removes abuses prevents the Revolution that avenges them.

The favourite accusation with foreigners against the English is their cruelty, and the crowd round a gibbet is the supposed proof of the justice of the charge. It is astonishing how few men deem it necessary to think a little when they are writing much. The English are by no means a cruel people, and their avidity to see an execution is no evidence whatsoever against them. The one fact, that while our laws are the severest in the world, we have not for centuries been able to accustom ourselves to the severity, and our administration of them has been singularly relaxed and gentle;—the one fact that Public Opinion has snatched the sword from the hand of Law, and that the unaltered barbarism of a code of ages has not sufficed to harden our sympathies, is alone a sufficient proof that the English are not a cruel, but a mild and humane* people.

* Another proof of this fact is in the unwillingness of persons to prosecute when they consider the punishment may be

In his *Thoughts upon Secondary Punishments* (p. 30), the distinguished Archbishop of Dublin is pleased to express himself with severity against that "misplaced compassion" for offenders, especially juvenile delinquents, which is a characteristic of the public. This remark is shallow and inconsiderate; the feeling that the punishment is disproportioned to the offence is, generally, the cause of the public sympathy with the offender, especially if young; and this very compassion, misplaced, as Dr. Whately deems it, is a proof of the humanity of the people. In elections, during all the riot and excess which formerly disgraced those septennial saturnalia, when men were heated with drink, passion, and party animosities, it is astonishing how little cruelty or outrage mingled with the uproar and bludgeon-fights which were considered necessary to the deliberate exercise of the reasoning faculty, on one of the most important occasions in which it could be exerted. In no Continental people could the passions have been so inflamed and instances of ferocity so miraculously rare. Our armies lay an acknowledged claim to the same character for humanity, which has so unjustly been denied to our people; and neither the French, Prussian, Spaniard, nor

too severe. The dearness of a prosecution, to be sure, goes some way towards this forbearance; but in civil causes we readily brave expense for revenge; it is only in criminal causes that we shudder, and draw back from the urging of the passions.

any European army, can compare with the humanity with which an English soldiery sack a town and traverse a country; our military outrages are conducted with the mildness of a Duval, and we never commit rape, arson, or murder,—unless *it is absolutely necessary!*

The superficial jest against our partiality to a newspaper tale of murder, or our passion for the *spectacle* of the gibbet, proves exactly the reverse of what it asserts. It is the tender who are the most susceptible to the excitation of terror. It is the women who hang with the deepest interest over a tale or a play of gloomy and tragic interest. Robespierre liked only stories of love. Nero was partial to the mildest airs of music. Ali Pacha abhorred all accounts of atrocity. The treacherous and bloody tribes of the South Sea islands prefer the calm strains of descriptive poetry, even to those of victory and war. If you observe a ballad-vender hawking his wares, it is the bloodiest murders that the women purchase. It is exactly from our unacquaintance with crime, viz. from the restless and mysterious curiosity it excites, that we feel a dread pleasure in marvelling at its details. This principle will suffice to prove that the avidity with which we purchase accounts of atrocity is the reverse of a proof of our own cruelty of disposition, and retorts upon the heads of our shallow assailants. What is true in books is true in sights; what is true on the mimic stage

is true on the real; and, if that which I have just said be a legitimate vindication of our love for narratives of terror, it is also a vindication of our tendency to crowd round an execution. But as regards the last, I believe that the vulgar of all nations would be equally disposed to gaze at that dread solemnization of death, ever an event so fraught with dark interest to the race that is born to die, if among all nations the gloomy ceremonial were as public as it is with us, and the criminal were rendered as notorious by the comments of journals, and the minute details of the session-court and the prison-house.

Another absurd and ancient accusation against us ought, by this time, to be known by our accusers, the French, to be unfounded on fact, viz. our *unequalled* propensity to suicide. That offence is far more frequent among the French themselves than it is with us. In the year 1816 the number of suicides committed in London amounted to seventy-two; in the same year, at Paris, they amounted to one hundred and eighty-eight; the population of Paris being some 400,000 less than that of London!* But suicides, if not unequalled in number by those of other countries, are indeed frequent with us, and so they always will be in countries where men can be reduced in a day

* *Not* taking into account the number of those unfortunates exposed at the *Morgue*, one half of whom at least were probably suicides.

from affluence to beggary. The loss of fortune is the general cause of the voluntary loss of life. Wounded pride,—disappointment,—the schemes of an existence laid in the dust,—the insulting pity of friends,—the humbled despair of all our dearest connexions for whom perhaps we toiled and wrought,—the height from which we have fallen,—the impossibility of regaining what we have lost,—the searching curiosity of the public,—the petty annoyance added to the great woe,—all rushing upon a man's mind in the sudden convulsion and turbulence of its elements, what wonder that he welcomes the only escape from the abyss into which he has been hurled!

If the Spaniards rarely commit suicide, it is because they, neither a commercial nor gambling people, are not subject to such reverses. With the French it is mostly the hazard of dice, with the English the chances of trade, that are the causes of this melancholy crime; melancholy! for it really deserves that epithet with us. We do not set about it with the mirthful gusto which characterizes the *felo de se* in your Excellency's native land. We have not yet, among our numerous clubs, instituted a club of suicides, all sworn to be the happiest dogs possible, and not to outlive the year! These gentlemen ask you to see them "go off"—as if Death were a place in the *malle poste*.—"Will you dine with me to-morrow, my dear Dubois?"

"With the greatest pleasure;—yet now I think of it, I am particularly engaged to shoot myself; I am really *au désespoir!*—but one can't get off *such* an engagement, you know."

"I would not ask such a thing, my dear fellow. Adieu!—By the way, if you should ever *come back* to Paris again, I have changed my lodgings, *au plaisir!*"

Exeunt the two friends; the one twirling his moustaches, the other humming an opera tune.*

This gaiety of suicidalism is not the death *á la mode* with us; neither are we so sentimental in these delicate matters, as our neighbours over the water. We do not shoot each other by way of being romantic. Ladies and gentlemen forced to "part company," do not betake themselves "to a retired spot," and tempt the dread unknown, by a brace of pistols, tied up with cherry-coloured ribbons.

In a word, when we shoot ourselves, we consider it no joke; we come to the resolution in sober sadness; we have no inherent predilection for the act; no "hereditary imperfection in the

* A writer in the *Journal des Debats* is particularly offended with this passage; and declares gravely that such a conversation never took place. I do not doubt it—If the said critic will sit to me for his picture, I shall be very happy to add him to my gallery of sketches, under the head of "The man who cannot take a joke." Such a man seldom sees truth—he is too dull for it. A matter-of-fact person is the last to comprehend all the matter of facts.

nervous juices" (as Montesquieu, with all the impudence of a philosopher, has gravely asserted) forcing us on to the "*finis, amnis,*"—the gates out of this world into the next. No people destroy themselves with a less lively inclination; and, so generally are sudden reverses of fortune the propellers to the deed, that with us not one suicide in ten would cease to live, if it were not that he has nothing to live upon. In fact, he does not relinquish life—life relinquishes him.

But if it be true, then, that we are so far from being a suicidal people, that the French have, by *strict* calculations, been computed to kill *their five to our one;* if among no commercial people, has the crime of suicide, perhaps, been not only less frequent, but committed with less levity,—the abhorrent offspring of the most intolerable reverses;—if this be true, what becomes of all those admirable books, witty and profound, which your Excellency's fellow-countrymen have written about our acknowledged propensity to ropes and razors, our inclination to kill ourselves, from the slightest causes, and out of a principle of *ennui?* What becomes of the ingenious systems that have been built upon that "fact;" enlivened by the gaiety of Voltaire; rendered touching by the sentimentality of De Staël—one writer accounting for it one way, one another; but, all sure to account for what they had forgotten to prove? Your Excellency may perceive, by their theories, which I

think I have now for ever demolished, how necessary it is for an Englishman sometimes to write about England. I say, their theories I have for ever demolished; yet, Heaven knows if I have,—there is a wonderful vigour of constitution in a popular fallacy. When the world has once got hold of a lie, it is astonishing how hard it is to get it out of the world. You beat it about the head, till it seems to have given up the ghost; and, lo, the next day it is as healthy as ever. The best example of the vitality of a fine saying, which has the advantage of being a fallacy, is in the ever-hacknied piece of nonsense attributed to Archimedes; viz., "that he could move the earth if he had any place at a distance from it, to fix a prop for his lever." Your Excellency knows that this is one of the standard allusions, one of the necessary stock in trade for all orators, poets, and newspaper writers; and persons, whenever they meet with it, take Archimedes for an extraordinary great man, and cry, "Lord, how wonderful!"—Now, *if* Archimedes had found his place, his prop, and his lever, and if he could have moved with the swiftness of a cannon-ball, 480 miles every hour, it would have taken him just 44,963,540,000,000 years to have raised the earth one inch!* And yet people will go on quoting absurdity as gospel;

* Ferguson. Critics have said, "what a fine idea of Archimedes!" but how much finer is the fact that refutes it. One of the sublimest things in the world is, plain truth!

wondering at the wisdom of Archimedes, and accounting for the unparalleled suicidalism of the English, till we grow tired of contradiction; for, when you cannot convince the Squire Thornhills of the world, you must incur the mortification of Moses, and be contented to let them out-talk you.

I think, however, that I need take no pains to prove the next characteristic of the English people, —a characteristic that I shall but just touch upon; viz. their wonderful Spirit of Industry. This has been the saving principle of the nation, counteracting the errors of our laws, and the imperfections of our constitution. We have been a great people, because we have been always active;—and a moral people, because we have not left ourselves time to be vicious. Industry is, in a word, *the* distinguishing quality of our nation, the pervading genius of our riches, our grandeur, and our power!

Every great people has its main principle of greatness, some one quality, the developing and tracing, and feeding and watching of which, has *made* it great. Your Excellency remembers how finely Montesquieu has proved this important truth, in the *Grandeur et Décadence des Romains*. With France, that principle is the love of glory; with America, it is the love of liberty; with England, it is the love of action;—the safest and most comprehensive principle of the three; for it gains

glory, without seeking it too madly, and it requires liberty, in order to exist.

Now, I think, that your Excellency (than whom, if no man sees more the folly in a statesman of over-refining, no man also, I apprehend, sees more clearly the necessity of his piercing beyond the surface, and seizing from the confused History of the Past, some one broad, though metaphysical principle, by which to guide and work out his policy)—I think, I say, that your Excellency will perceive, that when we have once discovered the national quality which has chiefly made a nation great, we cannot too warmly foster, and too largely encourage it; we should break down all barriers that oppose it; foresee, and betimes destroy, all principles that are likely to check or prevent it. It is the Vestal Fire which daily and nightly we must keep alive; and we should consider all our prosperity to be coupled with its existence. Thus, then, if *industry* be the principle of our power, we cannot too zealously guard it from all obstacle, or too extensively widen the sphere for its exertions; a truth which our statesmen have, to be sure, diligently cultivated, by poor-laws, that encourage idleness; and bounties, prohibitions, and monopolies, that amputate the sinews of action.

From this it would seem, that a policy that would be bad with other countries, has been pre-eminently bad with us.

The last time Micromegas paid us a visit, he was struck by a singular spectacle. He saw an enormous Giant laid at full length upon the ground, in the midst of a mighty orchard laden with fruit —chains were on his limbs, and weights upon his breast. The Giant kicked most lustily against these restraints, and his struggles so convulsed the ground, that every now and then they shook plenty of fruit from the neighbouring trees; the natives stood round, and seized the fruit as it fell. Nevertheless, there was far from being enough for the whole crowd, and the more hungry amongst them, growled very audibly at the more fortunate and better fed. The compassionate Micromegas approached the throng—"And who art thou, most unhappy giant?" he asked.

"Alas!" said the giant, "my name is Industry, and I am the parent of these ungrateful children, who have tied me down, in order that my struggles to get free may shake a few fruits to the ground."

"Bless me," said Micromegas, "what a singular device!—but do you not see, my good friends," turning to the crowd, "that your father, if he were free from these shackles, could reach with his mighty arms the boughs of the trees, and give you as much fruit as you wanted? Take this chain, for instance, from one arm, and try."

"That chain!" shouted some hundreds of the crowd; "impious wretch—it is Tithes!"

"Well then, these cords."

"Idiot!—those cords are Bounties; we should be undone if *they* were destroyed."

At this instant up came a whole gang of elderly ladies, with a huge bowl of opium, which they began thrusting down the throat of the miserable giant.

"And what the devil is that for?" said Micromegas.

"We don't like to see our good father make such violent struggles," replied the pious matrons, "we are giving him opium to lie still."

"But that is a drug to induce him to shake down *no* fruit, and then you would be starved—spare him the opium at least."

"Barbarous monster!" cried the ladies, with horror, "would you do away with the Poor-laws?"

"My children," said the poor giant, well-nigh at his last gasp, "I have done my best to maintain you all, there is food enough in the orchard for fifty times your number, but you undo yourselves by the injustice of crippling your father. You mean well by me—you compassionate my struggles—but instead of giving me liberty, these good ladies would set me to sleep. Trust to nature and common sense, and we shall all live happily together, and if these orchards ever fail you, I will plant new."

"Nature and common sense, dear father!" cried the children, "oh beware of these new-

fangled names—let us trust to experience, not to theory and speculation!"

Here a vast rush was made upon those eating the fruit they had got, by those who in the late scrambles had got no fruit to eat; and Micromegas made away as fast as he could, seeing too plainly, that if the Giant were crippled much longer, those who had laid by the most fruit would stand some chance of being robbed by the hunger and jealousy of the rest.

CHAPTER IV.

Courage of the English—Description of English Duelling—Valour of the English Army—Question of flogging in the Army dispassionately considered—Its Abolition, to be safe, must be coupled with other Reforms in the Code.

I HAVE reserved for a separate chapter a few remarks upon one of our national attributes—viz. Courage, because they will naturally involve the consideration of a certain question that has lately attracted much attention amongst us, viz. corporal punishments in the army. Your own incomparable La Bruyère has remarked, "That in France a soldier is brave and a lawyer is learned; but in Rome," says he, "the soldier was learned and the lawyer was brave—every man was brave." Now I think that with *us* every man is brave. Courage is more *universally* spread through the raw material of England than it is among that of any other people; but I do not think the manufacture is quite so highly wrought up in individual specimens as it is in France. I think that an

English gentleman, from the fear of a duel, would eat his words sooner than a Frenchman. You see a proof of this every day in our newspaper accounts of these "little affairs." The following is a very fair specimen of a duelling correspondence.

To the Editor of "The Times."

SIR,

You will oblige us by inserting the following account of the late affair between Mr. Hum and Lord Haw.

Your obedient servants,

LIONEL VARNISH.

PETER SMOOTHAWAY.

Col. of the — Regt.

"In the late election for the borough of Spoutit, Mr. Hum, being the candidate on the Whig side, was reported, in the *Spoutit and Froth Chronicle*, to have made use of the following expressions relative to Lord Haw, who is supposed to have some interest in the borough:—'As for a certain noble Lord, who lives not very far from Haw Castle, I confess that I cannot sufficiently express my contempt for his unworthy conduct (great applause); —it is mean, base, treacherous, and derogatory in the highest degree, for any nobleman to act in the manner that noblemen has thought proper to do.'"

On reading this extract, purporting to be from a speech by Mr. Hum, Colonel Smoothaway was deputed to wait on that gentleman by Lord Haw. Mr. Hum appointed Sir Lionel Varnish to meet

Colonel Smoothaway upon the matter: the result was the following memorandum:

In applying the words "mean, base, treacherous, and derogatory," to Lord Haw, Mr. Hum did not in the smallest degree mean to reflect upon his Lordship's character, or to wound his feelings. With this explanation, Colonel Smoothaway declares, on the part of Lord Haw, that Lord H. is perfectly satisfied.

(Signed) LIONEL VARNISH.
PETER SMOOTHAWAY.

But this epeapophogy, or word-swallowing, is only on one side in *this* specimen of correspondence. It is usually on *both* sides, and may be currently supposed to run thus:

"Mr. Hum having declared, that in calling Lord Haw 'a rascal,' he meant nothing personal to that nobleman, Lord Haw has no hesitation in saying, that he did not mean to offend Mr. Hum, when he called him 'a rogue' in reply."

Now this sort of shuffling with one's honour, as your Excellency very well knows, is never practised in France: the affront given, out at once go affronter and affrontee: they fight first, and retract afterwards. But the difference in the bilboa appetite of the gentry of the two nations depends, I suspect, rather on the advantage the French possess over the English in animal spirits, than in real courage. With your countrymen, duelling, as well as suicide, is a mere jest—an ebullition of mettlesome humour: with us, it is an affair of serious will-making and religious scruples. Your

courage is an impulse; our's must be made a principle. When once our blood is up, it does not descend in the thermometer very readily. The easy lubricity with which our gentlemen glide out of a duel is an understood thing with us, and neither party considers it a disgrace to the other. But if an Englishman has an affair with a foreigner, the case is very different; he is much more tenacious of apology, and ready for the field. A countryman of mine asked me once to officiate for him as second, in a quarrel he had with a Parisian *roué:* the cause was trifling, and the Englishman to blame. I recommended a compromise. "No!" said my hero, throwing his chest open, "if my antagonist were an Englishman, I should be too happy to retract a hasty expression; but these d—d French fellows *don't understand generosity.*"

I reminded my friend of his religious scruples. "True," said he, "but how can I think of religion, when I know De ——— is — an *atheist?*"

There is a doggedness in English courage which makes it more stubborn against adversity than that of any other people: it has in it more of the spirit of resistance, if less of the spirit of assault.

When we look to the army under Napoleon, and that under the Duke of Wellington, we are astonished at the difference of the system: in the one, the utmost conceivable encouragement is given to the soldier to distinguish himself; in the

other, the least. To rise from the ranks was, in the French army, an occurrence of every day. The commonest soldier could not obey a field-marshal, scarcely his Emperor, without seeing the widest scope for personal ambition in the obedience that he rendered: if the risks were immense, so also were the rewards. But in England, a wall, rarely to be surmounted, divides the soldier from all promotion beyond that of the halberd. He is altogether of a different metal, of a different estimate from a Frenchman. He has equal punishments to deter, not equal rewards to encourage: he can scarcely be a captain, but he can be terribly flogged. The two principles of conduct, hope and terror, ought to be united.

The question of flogging in the army, however, is far more important to England, more complicated in itself, than appears at first sight. Whenever it be abolished, the abolition, to be safe, should work an entire revolution in the service. I confess I think wonderful ignorance has been shown, both in the popular cry and in the parliamentary debates on that subject. People have not, in the least, perceived the consequences to which the abolition of corporal chastisement must lead. The heads of the army are perfectly right!—If it were abolished, *as a single alteration* in the martial code, one of two consequences would infallibly ensue, viz. the loss of discipline, or the substitute of the punishment of death. You hear men and legislators say,

in the plenitude of their ignorance, "Look at the French army and the Prussian army; you see no flogging there; why have flogging in the British army?" The answer to those who have studied the question is easy: in the first place, if there is not flogging in the French army, there is the penalty of death. *For all the offences for which we flog a soldier, the French shoot him.* Nay, they award death to an *incalculably greater* number of offences than meet corporal punishment with us: there are not above four offences for which flogging is inflicted in the greater part of our regiments; and certainly not eight in any: there are thirteen capital offences. *With the French there are above forty offences punishable with death!* Besides these, what a long catalogue in France of military faults, to which are appended the terrible awards, "*Fers 5, 6, 10 ans.*" *Boulet,—Travaux Publiques,* for the same periods! The French code does not embrace flogging, but it embraces punishments much more severe, and much more lightly incurred. But the Prussian army? In the first place, the Prussian code *does* sanction corporal punishment to the amount of one hundred lashes, forty of which only can be received at a time, so that the criminal may be brought out twice or thrice to complete his sentence. In the next place, what a superior rank of moral being does a Prussian soldier hold above an English one! How, in that military nation, is he schooled, and trained, and

selected from the herd! *Before* he is a soldier how necessarily is he a man of honour! Now this last consideration brings us to the true view of a question far too vitally important to be intrusted to hustings oratory and school-boy declamation. In no nation in the world is the army so thoroughly selected from the dregs and refuse of the people as it is in England: this is the real reason why flogging has been retained by us so long, and why, as a *single* measure of military reform, it would be dangerous to the last degree, to take *the power* of inflicting it out of the hands of a court martial. In France the Conscription raises the army from respectable classes: in Prussia the military system is even still more productive than in France of a superior moral soldiery;—but, in England, we have no conscription, no military schools; the soldier is culled from the sink of the peasantry; a man who runs away from a wife for whom he is too lazy to labour; who has had the misfortune of an illegitimate child; who has taken to poaching instead of to work, and fears the tread-mill; this is the hero you put into the British army, and about whom the eloquent Daniel O'Connell talks of chivalry and honour!*—"But oh!" cries one of our inconsiderate philanthropists, "if you take away flogging, you will, in the first place, have a higher

* Two-thirds of the army, too, are Irish, and the lowest of them:—the dregs of an Irish populace! What a reflection!

class of men willing to enlist; and, in the second place, you will instil a more dignified sense of moral feeling into those already enlisted." Stay a bit; let us consider these arguments. Certainly you will gain these advantages if the abolition of flogging be made a part of a general reform (hereafter to be specified); but, as certainly you will not gain either of these advantages by that abolition alone. Let us look to the constitution of the army! Suppose a soldier commits theft, he is given up to the civil authority, he is transported for seven years: he returns a most accomplished rascal, where then does he go? Why back into the army again. Let a soldier be ever such a rogue, it is exceedingly difficult for the officer to procure his discharge from the War Office. For what reason? Why, because to discharge a soldier would be considered a premium to a man to behave ill. An excellent reason; but what does it prove? It proves that the service is felt to be such a hardship, even by the depraved and imbruted, who at present belong to it, that a discharge is a blessing, which men would (if encouraged by any hope of success) behave as ill as possible, in order to procure. Is it flogging alone that makes it a hardship? Pooh, no—scarcely one man in a whole regiment is flogged in a year. He who knows any thing of the constitution of Human Nature, knows that it is not the remote chance of punishment, it is actual

and constant *désagrémens* that make men discontented with their situation.* Now, how then can one rationally suppose that if you abolished corporal punishment, "a better class of persons" would voluntarily consent to herd with returned convicts, and rush open-armed into a state of existence which even returned convicts would be too happy to get discharged from?—Still less, how can one hope to institute a high sense of honour among men already selected from classes where honour is unknown? Talk of Prussia, indeed! *there* a soldier considers it not the greatest blessing, but the heaviest misfortune to be discharged: *he was trained to think so before he went into the army.* They make the feeling of honour *first*, and *then* they appeal to it.† To deprive a Prussian soldier of his cockade, is a grievous humiliation. A certain English colonel,

* Thus, among the offences of an English soldier are these instances of "disgraceful conduct:"

"In wilfully maiming or injuring himself or another soldier, even at the instance of such soldier, with intent to render himself, or such soldier, unfit for the service.

"In tampering with his eyes.

"In absenting himself from hospital whilst under medical care, or other gross violation of the rules of any hospital, thereby wilfully producing or aggravating disease or infirmity, or wilfully delaying his own cure." A pretty alluring sort of condition, in which a man is forbidden to contract diseases and to court blindness for the purpose of getting out of it!

† Even in the *civil* schools of Prussia there is a law, "That no punishment shall be inflicted which wounds the sentiment of honour."

desirous of imitating the Prussians, took away the cockade from a soldier who he thought seemed more alive to honour than the rest of his comrades; the soldier was exceedingly grateful; it saved him the trouble of keeping it clean! But, in some regiments, flogging has been done away with? Ay, and how has it succeeded? I venture to affirm that those regiments are the most insubordinate in the army.* In some the punishment was abolished, and the commanding officer has been compelled to restore it. But am I then the advocate for this horrible punishment?—certainly not; only when we begin to reform the army let us begin at the right end—let us begin with the system of Recruiting. If flogging be continued, we may continue to have a courageous and disciplined army under the present system—if it is to be removed, we must alter the system altogether. As we diminish the motive of fear we must increase the motive of hope; as we diminish the severity of punishment, we must inculcate the sentiment of shame. In the first

* Mr. Hume declares that in those regiments discipline is equally preserved. He has a right to his opinion; but just ask military men: nay, the very officers of those regiments, in which the experiment was tried: its fruitlessness is notorious in the army. During the year 1833, in those regiments from which corporeal punishment has been banished, court-martials have almost invariably multiplied and in no ordinary degree: what is most noticeable is, that the chief offence of the soldier in these regiments has been that of assaults on the civilian. With a manufacturing population, and in these inflammatory times, what lessons of caution we ought to derive from that single fact!

place we should institute Military Schools for privates, where the principle of honour can be early instilled: in the second place, we ought, as in Prussia, to introduce into the army the system of *degrading*. By this system every man first enlisting, enters into a certain class, and is entitled to certain distinctions of dress; if found, in that class, incorrigible by its ordinary punishments, *then* he is degraded to another class, the distinctions are taken away from him, and he is liable to severer penalties. It is only when thus degraded that a Prussian soldier can receive corporal punishment. Amendment restores him to his former rank. In the third place, as the soldier ought at these military schools to receive a much better degree of education than at present, so he ought to be much more capable of rising from the ranks, even to the highest stations.* In the fourth place, no soldier should be enlisted without the recommendation of a good character.† In the fifth place, the system of adequate pensions after a certain service should be firmly established; nothing can be more injudicious than the recent alterations on that head;‡ but the pension should

* Nor ought promotion to be a matter of purchase.—What custom more discouraging to all worth save that of wealth!

† A principal cause of the unwillingness of soldiers to serve is, that the profligate dislike restraint, and the orderly dislike companionship with the profligate; you remove both these causes by refusing to receive the profligate.

‡ It would be a great source of consolation to a soldier to be

not depend solely on the date of the service—good conduct should abbreviate, bad conduct prolong it. No soldier once given up to the civil law should be allowed to return to the army. If it be practicable under the present passion for petty economies * and niggling reforms to do all this, the power of corporal punishment may be safely denied to court-martials, and the abolition of flogging, *coupled* with such ameliorations, would indeed contribute to produce a higher sense of honour and a more generous spirit of discipline; but if that punishment be abolished, as a *single and unaccompanied* act of reform, I confess that I tremble for the consequences. I see before me an uneducated and reckless soldiery, proverbially addicted, before that of all other armies, to the temporary insanity of drunkenness, from whom you suddenly take one strong governing motive of fear, without substituting another of hope—from whom you remove restraint, but in whom the whole spirit of your remaining laws forbids you to instil honour. I see that there may be times, as on a march, when all the punishments you would

sure to receive his discharge after a certain number of years, accompanied with a competence for his old age; by this hope, you would indeed attract a better class of men. The small economists cried out on this system;—they complain that there is too much fear in the military code, and yet they have taken away its most agreeable and reasonable incitement of hope!

* For such alterations would be evidently attended with expense.

substitute are not at hand; and I know that with a soldier, above all men, punishment to be effectual must be immediate.* I fear that, discipline once weakened, not only insubordination, but rapine and licentiousness, the absence of which has hitherto so distinguished our army, would creep in among men to whom a moral education is unknown; I fear yet more, that in any collision with the people of manufacturing towns, who at present are ever incensing, by their own animosity, that of the soldiers; the check upon armed retaliation would be found insufficient and feeble;—inhuman restraints on soldiers are a great evil—an unruly soldiery would be a far greater one. Let us hope that if such an evil should arise, it will find its cure; it can do so either in the reforms I have sketched, but which I fear the aristocracy will not propose and the people will not pay for, or in the substitution of the terror of death for that of corporal punishment†—this

* Thus on board ship, where, for want of the necessary court martial, a delinquent cannot be immediately punished, all sorts of insubordination frequently prevail. The offender knows that he may be punished when he gets on shore, but in the mean while he has three or four weeks of impunity. The Duke of Wellington was right if he said, as he is reported to have done, "The English soldier is always a boy."

† There are several offences not punishable at present, either with death or transportation, but which I fear must become so, if the power of corporal punishment be altogether forbidden.

last is the more probable, and though the military code would be thus rendered severer by the abolition of flogging, I doubt if it would not be a more wise and a more honourable severity. It is said by very competent authorities, that if you were to poll the privates, you would find a majority against the entire abolition of the power of inflicting corporal punishment. This for two reasons: first, that when it is removed, all sorts of small and vexatious restraints, to which the soldiers are unaccustomed, are often resorted to by the officer, who, fearing that if Insubordination rose to a certain point, he should lose the power to repress it, is for ever, even to frivolity, guarding against its fancied beginnings: — but the second and more powerful reason is, that many of the soldiers have the sagacity to fear, that the removal of the power to flog them would be followed by a more facile prerogative to shoot.

Observe, in conclusion, that it is to the aristocratic spirit which pervades the organization of our army, a spirit which commands order by suppressing the faculties, not by inciting the ambition;—and which has substituted for a proper system of recruiting and of military schools, the barbarous but effective terror of the scourge—ob-

For instance: persuading to desert—drunkenness on duty—spreading false reports in the field—seizing supplies for the army, &c.

serve, I say, that it is to that spirit we owe the low moral standard of our army, and the consequent difficulty of abolishing corporal punishment. To one good end, our aristocracy have proceeded by the worst of means, and the nobleness of discipline has been wrought by the meanness of fear.

CHAPTER V.

SUPPLEMENTARY ILLUSTRATIONS OF CHARACTER.

The Sir Harry Hargrave of one party—The Tom Whitehead of another—William Muscle, of the Old School of Radical—Samuel Square, a Pseudo-philosopher of the New—My Lord Mute, the Dandy Harmless—Sir Paul Snarl, the Dandy Venomous—Mr. Warm, the Respectable Man—Mr. Cavendish Fitzroy, a corollary from the theorem of Mr. Warm—The English Thief—The Practical Man.

Sir Harry Hargrave is an excellent gentleman; his conscience is scrupulous to the value of a pin's head; he is benevolent, hospitable, and generous. Sir Harry Hargrave is never dishonest nor inhumane, except for the best possible reasons. He has, for instance, a very worthless younger son: by dint of interest with the Bishop of ———, he got the scapegrace a most beautiful living: the new rector has twenty thousand to take care of; and Sir Harry well knows, that so long as pointers and billiard-tables are to be met with, young Hopeful will never bestow even a thought on

his own. Sir Harry Hargrave, you say, is an excellent gentleman; yet he moves heaven and earth to get his son a most responsible situation, for which he knows the rogue to be wholly unfit. Exactly so; Sir Harry Hargrave applauds himself for it: he calls it—*taking care of his family.* Sir Harry Hargrave gives away one hundred and two loaves every winter to the poor; it is well to let the labourer have a loaf of bread now and then for nothing: would it not be as well, Sir Harry, to let him have the power always to have bread cheap? Bread cheap! what are you saying? Sir Harry thinks of his rents, and considers you a revolutionist for the question. But Sir Harry Hargrave, you answer, is a humane man, and charitable to the poor. Is this conscientious? My dear sir, to be sure; he considers it his first duty—*to take care of landed interest.* Sir Harry Hargrave's butler has robbed him; the good gentleman has not the heart to proceed against the rascal; he merely discharges him. What an excellent heart he must have! So he has; yet last year he committed fifteen poachers to gaol. Strange inconsistency! Not at all;—*what becomes of the country gentleman if his game is not properly protected!* Sir Harry Hargrave is a man of the strictest integrity: his word is his bond—he might say with one of the Fathers, "that he would not tell you a lie to gain heaven by it;" yet Sir Harry Hargrave has six times in his life paid five thousand pounds to three

hundred electors in Cornwall, who he knew would all take the bribery-oath, that they had not received a shilling from him. He would not tell a lie, you say; yet he makes three hundred men forswear themselves! Precisely so; and when you attempt to touch this system of perjury, he opposes you to his last gasp: but he is not to be blamed for this—*he is only attached to the venerable constitution of his forefathers!* Sir Harry Hargrave is an accomplished man, and an excellent scholar; yet he is one of the most ignorant persons you ever met with. His mind is full of the most obsolete errors; a very Monmouth-street of thread-bare prejudices: if a truth gleam for a moment upon him, it discomposes all his habits of thought, like a stray sunbeam on a cave full of bats. He enjoys the highest possible character among his friends for wisdom and virtue: he is considered the most consistent of human beings. Consistent!—yes, to his party!

Tom Whitehead is a very different person; he is clever, sharp, shrewd, and has lived a great deal at Paris. He laughs at antiquity; he has no poetry in his nature; he does not believe in virtue; with him "all men are liars." He has been a great gambler in his youth; he professes the most profligate notions about women; he has run through half his fortune; he is a liberal politician, and swears by Lord Grey. His father was a Whig before him; and for the last twenty years he has

talked about " the spirit of improvement." He is a favourite at the clubs; an honest fellow, because he laughs so openly at the honesty of other people. He is half an atheist, because he thinks it cant to be more than half a believer. But religion is a good thing for the people; whom, while he talks of enlightenment, he thinks it the part of a statesman to blind to every thing beyond the Reform Bill. He is for advancement to a certain point—till his party come in; he then becomes a Conservative—lest his party go out. Having had the shrewdness to dismiss old prejudices from his mind, he has never taken the trouble to supply their place with new principles: he fancies himself very enlightened, because he sees the deficiencies of other people: he is very ignorant, because he has never reflected on his own. He is a sort of patriot; but it is for " people of property;"—he has a great horror of the *canaille*. As Robert Hall said of Bishop Watson, " He married Public Virtue in his youth, and has quarrelled with his wife ever since." His party think him the most straightforward fellow in the world; for he never voted against them, and never will.

William Muscle is a powerful man; he is one of the people, radical to the back-bone: of the old school of Radicals,—he hates the philosophers like poison. He thinks Thistlewood a glorious fellow; and no words can express his hatred of William Pitt. He has got at last into Parliament,

which, he always declared, he could convince in a fortnight that he was the sole person in the universe fit to govern England;—whenever he speaks, he says one word about England, to fifty about America. Presidents with five thousand a-year are the visions that float for ever in his brain: he seeth not why the Speaker of the House of Commons should have more than a hundred a-year; he knoweth many an honest man among his constituents who would be Speaker for less. He accuses the aristocracy of an absolute and understood combination to cheat the good citizens of his borough. He thinketh that Lord Grey and Sir Robert Peel meet in private, to consult how they may most tax the working-classes. He hateth the Jews because they don't plough. He has no desire that the poor man should be instructed. He considereth the cry against taxes on knowledge as sheer cant. He hath a mortal hatred to museums, and asketh the utility of insects. His whole thought for the poor is how they shall get bread and bacon: he despiseth the man who preferreth tea to ale. He is thoroughly English; no other land could have produced the bones and gristle of his mind. He writeth a plain, strong style, and uttereth the most monstrous incredibilities, as if they were indisputable. He thinks fine words and good periods utter abomination. He esteemeth himself before all men. He believes that the ministers have consulted several times on

the necessity of poisoning him. He is indignant if others pretend to serve the People; they are his property. He is the Incarnation of popular prejudices and natural sense.' He is changeable as a weathercock, because he is all passion. He is the living representation of the old John Bull: when he dies, he will leave no like: it was the work of centuries to amalgamate so much talent, nonsense, strength, and foibles, into one man of five feet eight: he is the Old Radical—the great Aboriginal of annual parliamentarilism: he is the landmark of Reform fifty years ago: you may whitewash and put new characters on him, but he sticketh still in the same place: he is not to be moved to suit the whims of the philosophers. He hath done his work: a machine excellent at its day,—coarse, huge, massive, and uncouth; not being easily put out of order, but never perfectly going right. People have invented new machines, all the better for being less rude, and regulated by a wiser principle, though wrought from a less strong material.

Samuel Square is of a new school of Radicals; he also is a Republican. He is not a philosopher, but he philosophizes eternally. He liveth upon "first principles." He cannot move a step beyond them. He hath put the feet of his mind into boxes, in order that they may not grow larger, and thinks it a beauty that they are unfit for every-day walking. Whatever may be said by any man

against his logic, he has but one answer—a first principle. He hath no suppleness in him. He cannot refute an error. He stateth a truism in reply, that hath no evident connexion with the matter in dispute. He thinketh men have no passions; he considereth them mere clockwork, and he taketh out his eternal first principle, as the only instrument to wind them up by. He is assured that all men of all classes, trades, and intellects, act by self-interest, and if he telleth them that their interest is so-and-so, so-and-so will they necessarily act. In vain you show him that he never yet hath convinced any man, he replieth by a first principle, to prove, in spite of your senses, that he hath. He has satisfied himself, and demands no further proof. He is of no earthly utility, though he hath walled himself with a supposed utilitarianism. He cannot write so as to be read, because he conceives that all agreeable writing is full of danger. He cannot speak so as to be understood, precisely because he never speaks but in syllogisms. He hath no pith and succulence in him:—he is as dry as a bone. He liveth by system:—he never was in love in his life. He refuseth a cheerful glass; nay, perhaps he dieteth only upon vegetable food. He hath no human sympathies with you, but is a great philanthropist for the people to be born a thousand years hence. He never relieveth any one: he never caresseth any one: he never feeleth for any

one—he only reasoneth with every one—and that on the very smallest inch he can find of mutual agreement. If he was ever married I should suspect him to be the father who, advertising the other day for a runaway daughter, begged her, "if she would *not* return to her disconsolate parents, to send them back the key of the tea-chest." What is most strange about him is, that while he thinks all the rest of the world exceedingly foolish, he yet believes they are only to be governed by reason. You will find him visiting a lunatic asylum, and assuring the madman that it is not rational to be insane. He knoweth not one man from another; they seem to him as sheep or babies seem to us—exactly alike. He thinketh that he ought to have a hand in public affairs—the Almighty forbid! This is a scion from the tree of the new Radicals: he hath few brethren: he calleth himself a Philosopher, or sometimes a Benthamite. He resembleth the one or the other as the barber's block resembleth a man.—He *is* a block.

The spirit of coxcombry, as you find it on the Continent, would seem to be a perversion of the spirit of benevolence;—it is the desire to please, fantastically expressed. With us it is just the reverse, it seems a perversion of the spirit of malignity;—it is the desire to *dis*-please;—there is, however, one species of coxcombry which I

shall first describe; passive and harmless, it consists in no desire at all.

Lord Mute *is* an English *élégant*—a dandy. You know not what he *has* been. He seems as if he could never have been a boy: all appearance of nature has departed from him. He is six feet of inanity enveloped in cloth! You cannot believe God made him—Stultz must have been his Frankenstein. He dresseth beautifully—let us allow it—there is nothing *outré* about him: you see not in him the slovenly magnificence of other nations. His characteristic is neatness. His linen—how white! His shirt-buttons—how regularly set in! His colours—how well chosen! His boots are the only things splendid in his whole costume. Lord Mute has certainly excellent taste; it appears in his horses, his livery, his cabriolet. He is great in a school of faultless simplicity. There can be no doubt that in equipage and dress, Englishmen excel all other Europeans. But Lord Mute never converses. When he is dressed there is an end of him. The clock don't tick as it goes. He and his brethren are quiet as the stars—

> In solemn silence, all
> Move round this dark terrestrial ball.

But I wrong him—he *does* speak, though he does not converse. He has a set of phrases, which he

repeats every day:—"he can hum thrice, and buzz as often." He knows nothing of Politics, Literature, Science. He reads the paper—but mechanically; the letters present to him nothing to be remembered. He is a true philosopher: the world is agitated—he knows it not: the roar of the fierce democracy, the changes of states, the crash of thrones, never affect him. He does not even condescend to speak of such trifles. He riseth to his labour, dresseth, goeth out, clubbeth, dineth, speaketh his verbal round, and is at the Opera brilliant and composed as ever,

"The calm of heaven reflected on his face."

He never putteth himself into passions. He laughs not loudly. His brow wrinkles not till extreme old age. He is a spectator of life from one of the dress boxes. Were a *coup-de-soleil* to consume her Ladyship, he would say with Major Longbow, "Bring clean glasses and sweep away your mistress." *That* would be a long speech for him. Lord Mute is not an unpopular man: he is one of the inoffensive dandies. Lord Mute, indeed, is *not*!—it is his cabriolet and his coat that *are*. How can the most implacable person hate a coat and a cabriolet?

But Sir Paul Snarl is of the offensive species—the wasp dandy to the drone dandy. He is a clever*ish* man: he has read books and can quote dates, if need be, to spoil a good joke by proving

an anachronism. He drawls when he speaks, and raises his eyebrows superciliously. Sir Paul is a man of second-rate family, and moderate fortune. He has had to make his way in the world—by studying to be amiable?—no:—By studying to be disagreeable. Always doubtful of his own position, he has endeavoured to impose upon you by pretending not to care a farthing about you. He has wished to rise by depreciating others, and to become a great man, by showing that he thinks *you* an exceedingly small one. Strange to say, he has succeeded. He is one, indeed, of the most numerous class of successful dandies; a specimen of a common character. People suppose a man who seems to think so little of them, must be thought a great deal of himself. The honourable mistresses say to their husbands, "We must have that odious Sir Paul to dinner; it is well to conciliate him, he says such ill-natured things; besides, as he is so very fine, he will meet, you know, my dear, the Duke of Haut-ton; and we must have Crack to dress the dinner!" Thus, Sir Paul—clever dog!—is not only asked everywhere, but absolutely petted and courted, because he is so intolerably unpleasant!

Sir Paul Snarl is one of the dandies, but—mistake not the meaning of the word—dandy does not only signify a man who dresses well; a man may be a sloven, and yet a dandy. A man is called a dandy who lives much with persons *à la*

mode, is intimate with *the* dandy *clique*, and being decently well-born and rich, entertains certain correct, general notions about that indefinable thing, "good taste."* Sir Paul Snarl dresses like other people. Among very good dressers, he would be called rather ill-dressed; among the *oi polloi*, he would be considered a model. At all events, he is not thorough-bred in his appearance; he lacks the *senatorious decor;* you might take him for a duke's valet, without being much to blame for inexperience. Sir Paul and his class are the *cutters* in society. Lord Mute rarely *cuts*, unless you are *very* ill-dressed *indeed;* he knows his own station by instinct; he is not to be destroyed by "Who's your fat friend?" But Sir Paul is on a very different footing; *his* whole position is false—he can't afford to throw away an acquaintance—he knows no "odd people;" if he the least doubts your being *comme il faut*, he cuts you immediately. He is in perpetual fear of people finding out what he is; his existence depends on being thought something *better* than he is—a policy effected by knowing everybody higher

* Good taste is a very favourite phrase with the English aristocracy; they carry it to the pulpit and the House of Commons—"Such a man preached in very good taste," or "In what excellent taste So-and-so's speech was." Good taste applied to legislation and salvation!—what does the phrase mean? Heaven knows what it means in the pulpit; in the House of Commons it always means flattering the old members, and betraying impudence modestly.

and nobody lower than himself; that is exactly the definition of Sir Paul's consequence! Sir Paul's vanity is to throw a damp on the self-love of everybody else. If you tell a good story, he takes snuff, and turns to his neighbour with a remark about Almack's; if you fancy you have made a conquest of Miss Blank, he takes an opportunity of telling you, *par parenthèse*, that she says she can't bear you: if you have made a speech in the House of Lords, he accosts you with an exulting laugh, and a "Well, never mind, you 'll do better next time:" if you have bought a new horse at an extravagant price, and are evidently vain of it, he smiles languidly, and informs you that it was offered to him for half what you gave for it, but he would not have it for nothing: when you speak, he listens with a vacant eye: when you walk, he watches you with a curled lip: if he dines with you, he sends away your best hock with a wry face. His sole aim is to wound you in the sorest place. He is a coxcomb of this age and nation peculiarly; and does that from foppery which others do from malice. There are plenty of Sir Paul Snarls in the London world; men of sense are both their fear and antipathy. They are animals easily slain—by a dose of their own insolence. Their sole rank being fictitious, they have nothing to fall back upon, if you show in public that you despise them.

But who is this elderly gentleman, with a portly

figure? Hush! it is Mr. Warm, "*a most respectable man.*" His most intimate friend failed in trade, and went to prison. Mr. Warm forswore his acquaintance; *it was not respectable.* Mr. Warm, in early life, seduced a young lady; she lived with him three years; he married, and turned her off without a shilling—the connexion, for a married man, *was not respectable.* Mr. Warm is a most repectable man; he pays his bills regularly—he subscribes to six public charities—he goes to church with all his family on a Sunday —he is in bed at twelve o'clock. Well, well, all that 's very proper; but is Mr. Warm a good father, a good friend, an active citizen? or is he not avaracious, does he not love scandal, *is not his heart cold,* is he not vindictive, is he not unjust, is he not unfeeling? Lord! sir, I believe he *may* be all that; but what then? *everybody allows Mr. Warm is a most respectable man.*

Such a character and such a reputation are proofs of our regard for Appearances. Aware of that regard, behold a real imitating the metaphorical swindler. See that gentleman "fashionably dressed," with "a military air," and "a prepossessing exterior;" he calleth himself "Mr. Cavendish Fitzroy"—he taketh lodgings in "a genteel situation"—he ordereth jewels and silks of divers colours to be sent home to him—he elopeth with them by the back way. Mighty and manifold are the cheats he hath thus committed, and

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great the wailing and gnashing of teeth in Marylebone and St. James's. But, you say, surely by this time tradesmen with a grain of sense would be put on their guard. No, my dear sir, no; in England we are never on our guard against "such *respectable appearances.*" In vain are there warnings in the papers and examples in the police court. Let a man style himself Mr. Cavendish Fitzroy, and have a *prepossessing exterior*, and he sets suspicion at once to sleep. Why not? is it more foolish to be deceived by respectable appearances in Mr. Fitzroy, than by the respectable appearance of Mr. Warm?

But grandeur, in roguery, at least, has its drawbacks in happiness; the fashionable swindler with us, is not half so merry a dog as your regular thief. There is something melancholy and gentlemanlike about the Fitzroy set, in their fur coats and gold chains; they live alone, not gregariously. I should not be surprised, if they read Lord Byron. They are haunted with the fear of the tread-mill, and cannot bear low company; if they come to be hanged, they die moodily,—and often attempt prussic acid; in short, there is nothing to envy about them, except their good looks; but your regular THIEF,—ah, he is, indeed, a happy fellow! Take him all in all, I doubt if in the present state of English society he is not the lightest-hearted personage in it. Taxes afflict him not; he fears no scarcity of work. Rents may go down; labour

be dirt-cheap; what cares he?—A fall in the funds affects not his gay good humour; and as to the little mortifications of life,—

"If money grow scarce, and his Susan look cold,
Ah, the false hearts that we find on the shore!"

—why he changes his quarters, and Molly replaces Susan!

But, above all, he has this great happiness—he can never fall in society; that *terror of descending*, which in our complication of grades haunts all other men, never affects him; he is equally at home in the tread-mill, the hulks, Hobart's Town, as he is when playing at dominoes at the Cock and Hen, or leading the dance in St. Giles's. You must know, by the way, that the English thief has many more amusements than any other class, save the aristocracy; he has balls, hot suppers, theatres, and *affaires du cœur* all at his command; and he is eminently social—a jolly fellow to the core; if he is hanged, he does not take it to heart like the Fitzroys; he has lived merrily, and he dies game. I apprehend, therefore, that if your Excellency would look for whatever gaiety may exist among the English, you must drop the "Travellers" for a short time, and go among the thieves. You might almost fancy yourself in France, they are so happy. This is perfectly true, and no caricature, as any policeman will bear witness. I know not if the superior hilarity and cheerfulness of

thieves be peculiar to England; but possibly, over-taxation (from which *our* thieves are exempted) may produce the effect of lowering the animal spirits of the rest of the Community.

Mr. Bluff is the last character I shall describe in this chapter. He is the sensible, *practical* man. He despises all speculations, but those in which he has a share. He is very intolerant to other people's hobby-horses; he hates both poets and philosophers. He has a great love of facts; if you could speak to him out of the multiplication table, he would think you a great orator. He does not observe how the facts are applied to the theory; he only wants the facts themselves. If you were to say to him thus, "When abuses arise to a certain pitch, they must be remedied," he would think you a shallow fellow—a theorist; but if you were to say to him, "One thousand pauper children are born in London; in 1823, wheat was forty-nine shillings; hop-grounds let from ten to twelve shillings an acre, and you must, *therefore*, confess that, when abuses arise to a certain pitch, they must be remedied;" Mr. Bluff would nod his wise head, and say of you to his next neighbour, "That 's the man for my money, you see what a quantity of facts he puts into his speech!"

Facts, like stones, are nothing in themselves, their value consists in the manner in which they are put together, and the purpose to which they are applied.

Accordingly, Mr. Bluff is always taken in. Looking only at a fact, he does not see an inch beyond it, and you might draw him into any imprudence, if you were constantly telling him "two and two make four." Mr. Bluff is wonderfully English. It is by "practical men," that we have ever been seduced into the wildest speculations; and the most preposterous of living theorists, always begins his harangues with—"Now, my friends, let us look *to the facts.*" *

* The reader will perceive, I trust, the spirit of these remarks. Of course every true theory must be founded on facts; but there is a tendency in the country to suppose, that a man who knows how gloves are made, must necessarily know best, by what laws glove-making should be protected; the two species of knowledge are perfectly distinct. A mind habituated to principles, can stoop to details, because it seizes and classifies them at a glance: but a mind habituated to detail is *rarely* capable of extending its grasp to a principle. When a man says he is no orator, he is going to make an oration. When a man says he is a plain practical man, I know he is going, by the fact that one and one make two, to prove the theory that two and two make seven!

END OF BOOK I.

BOOK THE SECOND

SOCIETY AND MANNERS.

INSCRIBED

TO ——, Esq.

"Voilà ce que je suis par une expérience de toutes sortes de livres et de personnes."

Pensées de Pascal.

CHAPTER I.

SOCIETY AND MANNERS.

Respect paid to Wealth—Fable from Quevedo—Fashion—Distinction between Fashion and Opinion—Contention between the Great and the Rich—The Love of Display—Anecdote of Lucien Bonaparte—First blow to Parade given by a Despot—Custom of Matchmaking—Marriages for Love not very common—Quin's *bon mot* applicable to the Herd of *Elégans*—Open Matchmaking is prejudicial to Sincerity, and contributes to Dulness—So poor an Ambition blights the Sympathy with public Virtue—Story of the Thurstons—A clever Woman's Excuse for the Radicalism of her Nephew—Political Sentiment stronger among Females of the Middle and Lower Class—Anecdote of a Scot and Lot Voter, and his affianced—Power of Ridicule stronger with us than the French—More dangerous in its Influence over a grave than a frivolous People—Influence of Cliques—Society in the Provinces more natural and courteous than in London—Character of the Longuevilles—Clubs; their salutary Effect—They contain the Germ of a great social Revolution.

I INSCRIBE to you, my dear ——, this part of my work, which consists of sketches from the various aspects of our SOCIAL SYSTEM; for I know no man who can more readily judge if the likeness be correct. Your large experience of

mankind, and the shrewdness of your natural faculties of observation, have furnished you with a store of facts, which the philosophy you have gleaned from no shallow meditation, and no ordinary learning, enables you most felicitously to apply. Many of the remarks in this part of my work are the result of observations we have made together; and, if now and then some deduction more accurate than the rest should please the reader, I might perhaps say, in recollecting how much my experience has profited by yours, *ce n'est pas moi qui parle, c'est Marc Aurèle.*

As the first impression the foreigner receives on entering England is that of the evidence of wealth, so the first thing that strikes the moral inquirer into our social system is the respect in which wealth is held: in some countries Pleasure is the idol; in others, Glory, and the prouder desires of the world; but with us, Money is the mightiest of all deities.

In one of those beautiful visions of Quevedo, that mingle so singularly the grand with the grotesque, Death (very differently habited and painted from the ordinary method of portraying her effigies) conducts the poet through an allegorical journey, in which he beholds three spectres, armed, and of human shape, "so like one another," says the author, "that I could not say which was which; they were engaged in fierce contest with a fearful and misshapen monster:—"

." Knowest thou these?" quoth Death, halting abruptly, and facing me.

" No, indeed," said I;—" and I shall insert in my Litany to be for ever delivered from the honour of their acquaintance."

" Fool!" answered Death, " these are already thy old acquaintance; nay, thou hast known scarcely any other since thy birth. They are the capital enemies of thy soul—the World, the Flesh, and the Devil. So much do they resemble each other, that in effect he who hath one hath all. The ambitious man clasps the World to his heart, and lo! it is the Devil! the lecher embraces the *Flesh*, and the Devil is in his arms!"

" But who," said I, " is this enemy against whom they fight?"

" It is the Fiend of Money," answered Death; " a boastful demon, who maintains that he alone is equal to all the three; and that where *he* comes, there is no need of *them*."

" Ah!" said I, " the Fiend of Money hath the better end of the staff."

This fable illustrates our social system. The World, the Flesh, and the Devil, are formidable personages! but Lucre is a match for them all. The Fiend of Money has the better end of the staff.

The word Society is an aristocratic term; and it is the more aristocratic bearings of its spirit

which we will first consider. Let us begin with FASHION.

The Middle Classes interest themselves in grave matters: the aggregate of their sentiments is called OPINION. The great interest themselves in frivolities, and the aggregate of *their* sentiments is termed FASHION. The first is the moral representative of the popular mind, the last of the aristocratic.

But the legislative constitutions of a people give a colouring even to their levities: and fashion is a shadow of the national character itself. In France, fashion was gallant under Louis XIV, and severe under the Triumvirate of the Revolution: in Venice it was mercantile: in Prussia it is military: in England its coin has opposite effigies—on one side you see the respect for wealth—on the other side the disdain! The man of titles has generally either sprung from the men of wealth (acknowledging the founder of his rank in the rich merchant, or the successful lawyer), or else he has maintained his station by intermarriages with their order; on the one hand, therefore, he is driven to respect and to seek connexion with the wealthy; but, on the other hand, the natural exclusiveness of titular pride makes him (or rather his wife) desire to preserve some circle of acquaintanceship sacred from the aspirations even of that class from which he de-

rives either his origin or the amount of his rent-roll. We allow the opulent to possess power, but we deny them fashion: the wheel turns round, and, in the next generation, behold the rich *roturier* has become the titled exclusive! This sustains, at once, the spirit of a ridiculous rivalry among the low-born rich and that of an inconsistent arrogance among the hereditary great. The merchant's family give splendid entertainments in order to prove that they are entitled to match with the nobleman's: the nobleman is unwilling to be outdone by the banker, and ostentation becomes the order of the day. We do not strive, as should be the object of a court, to banish dulness from society. No! we strive to render dulness magnificent, and the genius of this miserable emulation spreading from one grade to another, eac person impoverishes himself from the anxiety not to be considered as poor.

When Lucien Bonaparte was residing in England some years ago, he formed to himself the chimerical hope of retrenchment; he was grievously mistaken! the brother of Napoleon, who, as ambassador in Spain, as minister in France, and as prince in Italy, never maintained any further show than that which belongs to elegance, found himself in England, for the first time, compelled to ostentation. "It was not *respectable* for a man of his rank to be so plain!" Singularly enough, the first blow to the system of pomp was

given by a despot. The Emperor of Russia went about London in a hackney-coach, and familiarized the London *grands seigneurs* with the dignity of simplicity.

Fashion in this country, then, is a compound of opposite qualities; it respects the rich and affects to despise them; to-day you wonder at its servility, to-morrow at its arrogance.

A notorious characteristic of English society is the universal marketing of our unmarried women;—a marketing peculiar to ourselves in Europe, and only rivalled by the slave-merchants of the East. We are a matchmaking nation; the lively novels of Mrs. Gore have given a just and unexaggerated picture of the intrigues, the manœuvres, the plotting and the counterplotting that make the staple of matronly ambition. We boast that in our country, young people not being affianced to each other by their parents, there are more marriages in which the heart is engaged than there are abroad. Very possibly; but, in good society, the heart is remarkably prudent, and seldom falls violently in love without a sufficient settlement: where the heart is, *there* will the *treasure* be also! Our young men possessing rather passion than sentiment, form those *liaisons*, which are the substitute of love: they may say with Quin to the fair glovemaker, "Madam, I never make love, I always buy it *ready made*." We never go into a ball-room without feeling that we breathe the

air of diplomacy. How many of these gentle *chaperons* would shame even the wisdom of a Talleyrand. What open faces and secret hearts! What schemes and ambushes in every word. If we look back to that early period in the history of our manners, when with us, as it is still in France, parents betrothed their children, and, instead of bringing them to public sale, effected a private compact of exchange, we shall be surprised to find that marriages were not less happy nor women less domestic than at present. The custom of open matchmaking is productive of many consequences not sufficiently noticed; in the first place, it encourages the spirit of insincerity among all women,—"Mothers and Daughters,"—a spirit that consists in perpetual scheming, and perpetual hypocrisy; it lowers the chivalric estimate of women, and damps with eternal suspicion the youthful tendency to lofty and honest love. In the next place, it assists to render the tone of society dull, low, and unintellectual; it is not talent, it is not virtue, it is not even the graces and fascination of manner that are sought by the fair dispensers of social reputation: no, it is the title and the rent-roll. You do not lavish your invitations on the most agreeable member of a family, but on the richest. The elder son is the great attraction. Nay, the more agreeable the man be, if poor and unmarried, the more dangerous he is considered; you may admit him to ac-

quaintanceship, but you jealously bar him from intimacy. Thus society is crowded with the insipid and beset with the insincere. The women that give the tone to society take the tone from their favourites. The rich young man is to be flattered in order that he may be won; to flatter him you seem to approve his pursuits; you talk to him of balls and races; you fear to alarm him by appearing his intellectual superior; you dread lest he should think you a blue; you trust to beauty and a graceful folly to allure him, and you harmonize *your* mind into "gentle dulness," that it may not jar upon his own.

The ambition of women absorbed in these petty intrigues, and debased to this paltry level, possesses but little sympathy with the great objects of a masculine and noble intellect. They have, in general, a frigid conception of public virtue: they affect not to understand politics, and measure a man's genius by his success *in getting on*. With the women of ancient times, a patriot was an object of admiration; with the women of ours, he is an object of horror. Speak against pensions, and they almost deem you disreputable,—become a placeman, and you are a person of consideration. Thus our women seldom exalt the ambition of public life. They are inimitable, however, in their consolation under its reverses.

Mr. Thurston is a man of talent and ambition: he entered Parliament some years since, through

the medium of a patron and a close borough. He is what you call a Political Adventurer. He got on tolerably well, and managed to provide, at least, for his family. He professed liberal opinions, and was, perhaps, not insincere in them, as men go. He had advocated always something like Parliamentary Reform. THE BILL came—he was startled; but half inclined to vote for it. Mrs. Thurston was alarmed out of her senses; she besought, she wheedled, she begged her spouse to remember, that by Parliamentary Reform would fall Government Patronage; — she would say nothing of their other children, but he had a little boy two years old; what was to become of *him*? It was in vain to hope any thing from the Whigs; they had too many friends of their own to provide for. This Bill, too, could never be passed: the Tories would—must—come back again, and then what gratitude for his vote! So argued Mrs. Thurston; and like a very sensible woman; but as one who used no earthly arguments but those addressed to self-interest;—not a word as to what would be best for the nation; it was only, what was the best for the family. Mr. Thurston wavered—was seduced—voted against Reform, and is out of Parliament for the rest of his life. What makes matters still worse is, that his father, a merchant of moderate fortune, whose heir he was, failed almost immediately after this unfortunate vote. Thurston, with a large family, has become

a poor man; he has retired into the country; he can have nothing, of course, to expect from Government. Public life is for ever closed for him in the prime of his intellect, and just as he had begun to rise. All this may, perhaps, be borne cheerfully enough by a man who has acted according to his conscience, but the misfortune is, that Thurston was persuaded to vote against it.

But now, however, we must take another view of the picture. If Mrs. Thurston *was* the undoer, she *is* the consoler. In prosperity, vain, extravagant, and somewhat vehement in temper; in adversity, she has become a very pattern of prudence and affectionate forbearance. Go down into the country, and see the contrast in her present, and her past manner: she is not the same woman. This amendment on her part is very beautiful, and very English. But has she been able really to console Thurston? No, he is a gone man; his spirit is broken; he has turned generally peevish; and if you speak to him on politics, you will soon have to look out for a *second*. Mrs. Thurston, however, is far from thinking she was the least in the wrong; all that she can possibly understand about the whole question is, "*that it turned out unlucky.*"

A gentleman of good birth and much political promise, had been voting in several divisions with the more Radical Party. A man of authority, and one of the elders, who had been a Minister

in his day, expressed his regret at the bad company Mr. —— had been keeping, to the aunt of that gentleman, a lady of remarkable talents, and of great social influence. The aunt repeated the complaint to the member—"And what said you, dear madam, in reply?"

"Oh! I exculpated you most cleverly," replied the aunt. "Leave —— alone," said I; "nobody plays his cards better; you may be sure that his votes against the Irish Coercion Bill, &c. wo'n't tell against him one of these days. No, no; —— is not a rash, giddy young man, to be talked over; be sure he has calculated that it will be best for him in the end."

"Good Heavens!" cried the member, "what, *you—you* say this? you insinuate that I am actuated by my own interest! Why not have said at once the truth, that I voted according to my conscience?"

The lady looked at her nephew with mingled astonishment and contempt: —"Because — because," replied she, hesitating, "*I really did not think you such a fool!*"

Yet this innocent unconsciousness of public virtue is to be found only among the women of the metropolis brought in contact with the Aristocracy;—in the provincial towns, and in humbler life, it is just the reverse. Any man who has gone through a popular election, knows that *there* it is often by the honesty of the women, that that

of the men is preserved. *There* the conjugal advice is always, "Never go back from your word, John."—"Stick true to your colours.—All the gold in the world should not make you change your coat." How many poor men have we known who would have taken a bribe but for their wives. There is nothing, then, in English women that should prevent their comprehension of the nobleness of political honesty; it is only the great ladies, and their imitators, who think self-interest the sole principle of public conduct. Why is this? because all women are proud; *station* incites their pride. The great man rats, and is greater than ever; but the poor elector who turns his coat, loses his station altogether. The higher classes do not imagine there is a public opinion among the poor. In many boroughs a man may be bribed, and no disgrace to him; but if *after* being bribed, he break his word, he is cut by his friends for ever.

A very handsome girl had refused many better offers for the sake of a young man, a scot and lot voter in a certain borough. Her lover, having promised in her hearing to vote one way, voted the other. She refused to marry him. Could this have happened in the higher classes? Fancy, my dear ——, how the great would laugh; and what a good story it would be at the clubs, if a young lady just going to be married, were to say to her suitor one bright morning,—"No,

sir, excuse me; the connexion must be broken off. Your vote in the House of Commons last night was decidedly against your professions to your constituents."

It is a remarkable fact, that with us, a grave and meditative people, Ridicule is more dangerous and powerful in its effects, than it is with our lighter neighbours, the French. With them, at no period has it been the fashion to sneer at lofty and noble motives; they have an instantaneous perception of the Exalted—they carry their sense of it even to bombast—and they only worship the Natural when it appears with a stage effect. The lively demireps of Paris were charmed with the adoration of virtue professed by Rousseau;—and at an earlier period, even a Dangeau could venerate a Fenelon. At this moment, how ridiculous in our country would be the gallant enthusiasm of Chateaubriand: his ardour, his chivalry, his quixotism, would make him the laughing-stock of the whole nation;—in France these very qualities are the sole source of his power. Ridicule, in Paris, attaches itself to the manners; in London, to the emotions: it sneers with us less at a vulgar tone, a bad address, an ill-chosen equipage, than at some mental enthusiasm. A man professing very exalted motives is a very ridiculous animal with us. We do not laugh at vulgar lords half so much as at the generosity of patriots, or the devotion of philosophers. Bentham was thought exceedingly

ludicrous because he was a philanthropist; and Byron fell from the admiration of fine ladies when he set out for Greece. It is the great in mind, whom a fine moral sense never suffers to be the object of a paltry wit. Francis I. forbade his courtiers to jest at Ariosto; and Louis XIV. declared a certain general unfit for high office, because he had evinced the mental littleness of laughing at Racine.

Ridicule is always a more dangerous goddess with a sober and earnest than with a frivolous people. Persons of the former class can *be more easily made ashamed of emotion;* hence the reason why they conceal the sentiments which lighter minds betray. We see this truth every day in actual life—the serious are more deeply moved by ridicule than the gay. A satirist laughed the Spaniards out of chivalry; the French have never to this day been laughed out of any thing more valuable than a wig or a bonnet.

One characteristic of English society is the influence of CLIQUES. Some half a dozen little persons have, God knows how, got into a certain eminence—in some certain line;—they pretend to the power of dispensing all kinds of reputation. Some few years ago, there was the Authors' *clique* of Albemarle Street,* a circle of gentlemen who

* This *clique*, while it lasted, made a vast number of small reputations, upon which the owners have lived very comfortably ever since. Their's was the day of literary jobbing; they created

professed to weigh out to each man his modicum of fame; they praised each other—were *the* literary class, and thought Stewart Rose a greater man than Wordsworth.—Peace be with them!—they are no more—and fame no longer hangs from the nostrils of Samuel Rogers.

The *clique* of fine ladies and the *clique* of dandies still, however, exist; and these are the donors of social reputation: we may say of them as the Irishman said of the thieves, "They are mighty generous with what does not belong to them,"—being without character themselves, we may judge of the merits which induce them to give a character to others.

It is rather strange, till we consider the cause, that society in the Provinces is often more polished, intellectual, and urbane, than society in the Metropolis; when some great landed proprietor fills his country halls with a numerous circle of his friends, you see perhaps the most agreeable and charming society which England can afford. You remember (dear——) Sir Frederick Longueville

sinecures for the worthless, and time makes them a kind of property, which it seems wrong to take away; yet, whenever we meet any of the surviving possessors of these "unmerited pensions," such as * * * * and * * * *, we cannot help thinking with Gibbon, how often Chance is the dispenser of Reputation; and that the tutelary saint of England, the pattern doubtless of these gentlemen, is called the noble Saint George, though, in reality, he was the worthless George of Cappadocia. O Literature, how many Georges of Cappadocia have you converted into Saint Georges of England!

and his family: you know how disagreeable we used to think them; always so afraid they were not fine enough. Sir Frederick, with his pompous air, asking you when you had last seen your uncle, the earl, and her ladyship, dying to be good-natured, but resolved to keep up her dignity;—the girls out at *every* ball, and telling you invariably as a first remark that they did not see you at Almack's last Wednesday; so ashamed if you caught them at a party the wrong side of Oxford Street, and whispering, "Papa's country connexions, you know!"—You remember, in short, that the Longuevilles impressed every one with the idea of being fussy, conceited, second-rate, and wretchedly educated.; they *are* all this in town. Will you believe it—they are quite the contrary if you visit them in Sussex? There Sir Frederick is no longer pompous; frank and good-humoured, he rides with you over his farm, speaks to every poor man he meets, forgets that you have an uncle an earl, and is the very pattern of a great country gentleman—hospitable and easy, dignified and natural. Lady Longueville you will fancy you have known all your life—so friendly is her nature, and so cordial her manner; and, as for the girls, to your great surprise, you will find them well read and accomplished, affectionate, simple, with a charming spice of romance in them; upon my word I do not exaggerate. What is the cause of the change? Solely this: in London they know

not their own station; here it is fixed; at one place they are trying to be something they are not; here they try at nothing; they are contented with what they are.

What an enviable station is that of a great country gentleman in this beautiful garden of England! he may unite all the happiest opposites —indolence and occupation, healthful exercise and literary studies. In London, and in public life, we may improve the world—we may benefit our kind, but we never *see* the effects we produce; we get no gratitude for them; others step in and snatch the rewards; but, in the country, if you exert equal industry and skill, you cannot walk out of your hall without seeing the evidence of your labours: Nature smiles in your face and thanks you! yon trees you planted; yon corn-fields were a common—your capital called them into existence; they feed a thousand mouths, where, ten years ago, they scarce maintained some half a dozen starveling cows. But, above all, as you ride through your village, what satisfaction creeps around your heart! By half that attention to the administration of the Poor-laws which, in London, you gave to your clubs,* you have made industry replace

* See the recent Evidence on the Poor-laws in proof of the possibility of this fact. Even in the present wretched system, a vigorous and wise management has sufficed to put down pauperism. In Stanford Rivers, Essex, one man, Andrews, a farmer, with the concurrence of the rest of the parishioners, resolved to put down pauperism: in 1825 the money expended on the poor

sloth, and comfort dethrone pauperism. You, a single individual, have done more for your fellow-creatures than the whole legislature has done in centuries. This is true power; it approaches men to God; but the country gentleman often refuses to acknowledge this power;—he thinks much more of a certificate for killing partridges!

Clubs form a main feature of the social system of the richer classes of the Metropolis. Formerly they were merely the resort of gamblers, politicians, or *bons vivans*—now they have assumed a more intellectual character; every calling has its peculiar club—from the soldier's to the scholar's. The effect which this multiplicity of clubs has produced is salutary in the extreme; it has begun already to counteract the solitary disposition of the natives; it opens a ready intercourse with our foreign guests, who are usually admitted as honorary members; prejudices are rubbed off, and by an easy and unexpensive process, the most domestic or the most professional learn the views of the citizen of the world. At these resorts the affairs of the public make the common and natural topic of conversation, and nothing furthers the growth of public principle like the discussion of public matters. It

was 834*l.*; by management and energy, in 1828 it was only 196*l.* "All capable of work were employed; the labourers improved in their habits and comforts during the four years this system was in progress; there was not a single commitment for theft, or any other offence." Oh, *if* the country gentleman *would* awake to a sense of what he might be!

is said that clubs render men less domestic. No, they only render them less unsocial; they form a cheap and intellectual relaxation, and (since in *most* of the recent clubs the custom turns to neither gambling nor inebriety) they unbend the mind even while improving it. But these are the least advantages of clubs: they contain the germ of a mighty improvement in the condition of the humbler classes. I foresee that those classes will, sooner or later, adopt institutions so peculiarly favourable to the poor. By this species of co-operation, the man of 200*l.* a-year can, at present, command the nobler luxuries of a man of 5000*l.*; airy and capacious apartments, the decent comforts of the table,* lights, fires, books, and intellectual society. The same principle on a humbler scale would procure the same advantages for the shopkeeper or the artisan, and the man of 50*l.* a-year might obtain the same comforts as the man of 500*l.* If the experiment were made by the middle and lower classes in a provincial town, it could not fail of success; and, among its advantages would be the check to early and imprudent marriages, and the growth of that sense of moral dignity which is ever produced by a perception of the higher comforts of life.

* At the Athenæum, for instance, the dinner, which at an hotel would cost 7*s.* or 8*s.*, costs about 3*s.*: viz. a joint, vegetables, bread, butter, cheese, &c. and half a pint of wine. I believe in some clubs the price is even less.

Probably, from the success of this experiment, yet newer and more comprehensive results would arise. A gentleman of the name of Morgan, in a letter to the Bishop of London, proposes the scheme of clubs, not for individuals only, but families—a plan which might include education for children and attendance in sickness. Managed by a committee, such clubs would remove the possibility of improvidence and unskilful management in individuals. For professional and literary men, for artists, and the poorer gentry, such a scheme would present the greatest advantages. But the time for its adoption is not come; two great moral checks still exist in our social habits—the aristocratic pride not of *being as well off* as our neighbours, but of *seeming better off*, and that commercial jealousy of appropriation which makes us so proverbially like to have *a home of our own*. If ever these feelings decrease among us, I have little doubt that, from the institution of clubs will be dated a vast social Revolution. But France, rather than England, is the proper arena for the first experiment of Mr. Morgan's system.

CHAPTER II.

CONVERSATION AND LITERARY MEN.

Inelegance of Conversation—With us the Court does not cultivate the Graces of Language—Samples of Dialogue—Literary Men; their want of a fixed position with us—They do not mix enough in Society to refine its Tone—Effect of Night Sittings in Parliament in diminishing the intellectual Attractions of Society—Men of Letters fall into three Classes—Characters of Nettleton, Nokes, and Lofty.

Among the characteristics of English society, there is one, my dear ——, which cannot but have seemed to you as worthy of notice, and that is "the curious felicity" which distinguishes the tone of conversation. In most countries, people of the higher stations, if they do not express their ideas with all the accuracy and formality of a treatise on logic, preserve, at least, with a certain degree of jealousy, the habit of a clear and easy elegance in conversation. In France, to talk the language well is still the indispensable accomplishment of a gentleman. Society preserves the happy diction, and the graceful phrase, which literature

has stamped with its authority: And the Court may be considered as the Master of the Ceremonies to the Muses.* But in England, people even in the best and most fastidious society, are not remarkable for cultivating the more pure or brilliant order of conversation, as the evidence of *ton*, and the attribute of rank. They reject, it is true, certain vulgarities of accent, provincial phrases, and glaring violations of grammar; nay, over certain words, they now and then exercise the caprices of fashion: James to-day, may be Jeemes to-morrow; Rome may be softened into Room; and cucumber may receive its final exactness of pronunciation from the prosodiacal fiat of my Lord Hertford. But these are trifles: the regular and polished smoothness of conversation, the unpedantic and transparent preciseness of meaning, the happy choice, unpremeditated, because habitual, of the most graceful phrases and polished idioms which the language affords—these, the natural care and province of a lettered court, are utterly unheeded by the circles of the English aristocracy. Nor is there any other circle, since literary men with us are so little gregarious, that repairs their inattention; and our rational conversation is for the most part carried on in a series of the most extraordinary and rugged abbreviations—a species of talking short-hand. Hesitating, Humming, and

* Nay, to catch the expressions of the court is, in France, to acquire elegance of style.

Drawling, are the three Graces of our Conversation.

We are at dinner:—a gentleman, "a man about town," is informing us of a misfortune that has befallen his friend: "No—I assure you—now err—err—that—er—it was the most shocking accident possible—er—poor Chester was riding in the Park—er—you know that grey—er—(substantive dropped, hand a little flourished instead) – of his—splendid creature!—er—well, sir, and by Jove—er—the—er—(no substantive, flourish again)—took fright, and—e—er"—Here the gentleman throws up his chin and eyes, sinks back exhausted into his chair, and after a pause adds, "Well, they took him into—the shop—there—you know—with the mahogany sashes—just by the Park—er—and the—er—man there—set his —what d'ye call it—er—collar-bone; *but* he was —er—ter-ri-bly—terribly"—a full stop. The gentleman shakes his head, and the sentence is suspended to eternity.

Another gentleman takes up the wondrous tale thus logically: "Ah! shocking, shocking!—*but* poor Chester was a very agreeable—er"—full stop!

"Oh! devilish gentlemanlike fellow!—quite shocking!—quite—did you go into the—er—today?"

"No, indeed; the day was so *un*—may I take some wine with you?"

The ladies usually resort to some pet phrases, that, after the fashion of short-hand, express as much as possible in a word: "What do you think of Lady ——'s last novel?"

"Oh! they say 'tis not very natural. The characters, to be sure, are a little overdrawn; and then the style—so—so—I don't know what—you understand me—but it's a *dear* book altogether! —Do you know Lady —— ?"

"Oh dear yes! *nice* creature she is."

"Very *nice* person indeed."

"What a *dear* little horse that is of poor Lord ——!"

"He is very vicious."

"Is he really?—*nice* little thing."

"Ah! you must not abuse poor Mrs. ——; —to be sure, she is very ill-natured, and they say she's *so* stingy—but then she really is such a *dear*—"

Nice and *dear* are the great To Prepon and To Kalon of feminine conversational moralities.

But, perhaps, the genius of our conversation is most shown in the art of explaining—

"Were you in the House last night?"

"Yes—er—Sir Robert Peel made a splendid speech!"

"Ah! and how did he justify his vote? I've not seen the papers."

"Oh, I can tell you exactly—ehem—he said, you see, that he disliked the ministers, and so forth! you understand—but that—er—in these times, and so forth—and with this river of blood—oh! he was very fine *there!*—you must read it—well, sir; and then he was very good against O'Connell, capital—and all this agitation *going on*—and murder, and so forth—and then, sir, he told a capital story, about a man and his wife being murdered, and putting a child in the fireplace—you see—I forget now, but it was capital: and then he wound up with—a—with—a—in his usual way, in short. Oh! he quite justified himself—you understand—in short, you see, he could not do otherwise."

Caricatured as this may seem to others, I need not assure you that it is to the life: the explainer, too, is reckoned a very sensible man; and the listener saw nothing inconclusive in the elucidation.

Women usually form the tone of conversation, having first taken the tone of mind from the men. With us, women associate with the idler portion of society—the dandies, the hangers-on; they are afraid of being thought blue, because then these gentlemen would be afraid of them. They connect literature and wisdom with 'odd persons not in society;' senators and geniuses are little seen amongst

them. It is their bore of an uncle who makes those long speeches about the malt tax. The best matches are the young men of Melton and Crockford's; (as I have before said) they must please the best matches; they borrow the tone most pleasing to them; the mothers, for the sake of the daughters, the daughters for their own sake—thus, to a slang of mind, they mould a fitting jargon of conversation. Our aristocracy does not even preserve elegance to *ton*, and, with all the affectations, fosters none of the graces, of a court. France owes the hereditary refinement and airiness of conversation, that distinguishes her higher orders, less, however, to the courtiers than to those whom the courtiers have always sought. Men of letters and men of genius have been at Paris invariably drawn towards the upper circles, and have consumed their own dignity of character in brightening the pleasures of the great; but, in London, men of intellectual distinctions are not frequently found in that society which is termed the best; the few who do haunt that gloomy region, are but the scattered witlings of an ancient *clique*, who have survived even the faculty of premeditating good things; they do not belong to this day, but to the past, when Devonshire House and Melbourne House were for a short time and from fortuitous circumstances made the resort of genius, as well as rank; the fashion thus set was brief and evanescent, and expired with the bril-

liant persons who, seeking to enliven the great world, only interrupted its dulness. They have played off the fireworks, and all is once more dark.

The modern practice of Parliament to hold its discussions at night has a considerable influence in diminishing the intellectual character of general society. The House of Commons naturally drains off many of the ablest and best informed of the English gentlemen: the same cause has its action upon men of letters, whom statesmen usually desire to collect around them; the absence of one conspires to effect the absence of the other: our saloons are left solely to the uncultivated and the idle, and you seek in vain for those nightly reunions of wits and senators which distinguished the reign of Anne, and still give so noble a charm to the assemblies of Paris.

The respect we pay to wealth absorbs the respect we should pay to genius. Literary men have not with us any fixed and settled position *as* men of letters. In the great game of honours, none fall to their share. We may say truly with a certain political economist, "We pay best, 1st, those who destroy us, generals; 2nd, those who cheat us, politicians and quacks; 3rd, those who amuse us, singers and musicians; and, least of all, those who instruct us." It is an important truth noted by Helvetius, that the degree of pub-

lic virtue in a state depends exactly on the proper distribution of public rewards. "I am *nothing* here," said one of the most eminent men of science this country ever produced, "I am forced to go abroad sometimes to preserve my self-esteem."

Our English authors thus holding no fixed position in society, and from their very nature being covetous of reputation, often fall into one of three classes; the one class seek the fashion they cannot command, and are proud to know the great; another become irritable and suspicious, afraid that they are never sufficiently esteemed, and painfully vain out of a sense of bashfulness; the third, of a more lofty nature, stand aloof and disdainful, and never consummate their capacities, because they will not mix with a world to which they know themselves superior.

A literary man with us is often forced to be proud of something else than talent—proud of fortune, of connexion, or of birth—in order not to be looked down upon. Byron would never have set a coronet over his bed if he had not written poetry? nor the fastidious Walpole have affected to disdain the author, if he had not known that with certain circles, authorship was thought to lower the gentleman. Every one knows the anecdote of a certain professor of chemistry, who, eulogizing Boyle, thus concluded his panegyrics:

"He was a great man, a very great man; he was *father* of chemistry, and—*brother* to the Earl of Cork!"

You laugh at the simplicity of the professor; after all it was no bathos in practice;—depend upon it, the majority of the world thought quite as much of the brother of Lord Cork as they did of the father of chemistry. The Professor was only the unconscious echo of the vulgar voice of Esteem.

Observe Mr. Nettleton; he is a poet of celebrity: is that all? marry come up! he is a much greater man than that comes to—*he is on the best possible terms at Holland House.* He values himself much on writing smooth verses; he values himself more on talking with a certain tone of good breeding. He is a wit—a very rare character; yes, but he does not take so much pride in being merely a wit, as *on being a wit at the best houses!* Mr. Nettleton is one of the vainest of men; but it would not please him much to hear you admired him, if he thought you a nobody. He is singularly jealous; but you might make Europe ring with your name, and he would not envy you, unless the *grands seigneurs* ran after you. "Mr. —— has written a beautiful book; have you seen it, Nettleton?"

"No; *who says* it is beautiful?"

"Oh! all the world, I fancy."

"There you are mistaken. We talked over all

the new works at Miss Berry's last night, and all the world said nothing about your Mr. What's-his-name, and *his* book."

"Well, you are a judge of these matters; all I know is, that the Duke of Devonshire is mad to be introduced to him."

Nettleton, turning quite pale, "*The Duke of Devonshire introduced to him!*"

A smaller man than Mr. Nettleton in the literary world, is Mr. Nokes. Mr. Nokes is a prototype of the small gear; not exactly a poet, nor a novelist, nor an historian, but a little of all three; a literary man, in short—*homme des lettres*. In France he would enjoy a very agreeable station, mix with other *hommes des lettres*, have no doubt of his own merit, and be perfectly persuaded of his own consequence. Very different from all this is Mr. Nokes: he has the most singular distrust of himself; he liveth in perpetual suspicion that you mean to affront him. If you are sallying out on the most urgent business, your friend dying, your motion in the House of Commons just ready to come on, your mistress waiting to see you for the last time before she returns your letters, and hopes you may be happy, though she would hate you if you were not miserable to your dying day—if, I say, on some such business you should be hurrying forth, woe to you if you meet Nokes! You pass him with a hasty nod, and a "how are you, dear sir?" Nokes never forgives you, you

have hurt his feelings indelibly. He sayeth to himself, "Why was that man so eager to avoid me?" He ruminateth, he museth, he cheweth the cud upon your unmannerly accost. He would have had you stop and speak to him, and ask him after the birth of his new poem, and hope his tale in the Annual was doing as well as could be expected; he is sorely galled at your omission; he pondereth the reason; he looketh at his hat, he looketh at his garments, he is persuaded it is because his habiliments were not new, and you were ashamed to be seen with him in the street. He never hits on the right cause; he never thinketh you may have pressing business; Nokes dreameth of no business save that which to Nokes appertaineth. Nokes is the unhappiest of men; he for ever looks out for cantharides to rub into his sores. If you meet him in a literary party, you must devote the whole evening to him and his projects, or he considers you the most insolent and the most frivolous of mankind; he forgetteth that there are fifty other Nokes's in the room. He boweth to you always with a proud humility, as if to say, "I am a great man, though *you* don't think so." Nokes is, at once, the most modest and the most impudent of our species. He imagines you despise him; yet he is chafed because you do not adore. You are oppressed with incalculable business; a lawyer, perhaps, in full practice; the editor of a daily newspaper; the member of a Reformed Parliament

engaged in thirteen committees; yet, on the strength of a bare introduction, he sendeth you in manuscript, the next day—three plays, two novels, and thirty poems, which he bashfully requesteth you first, to read; secondly, to correct; and, thirdly, to interest yourself to get published. Two days after, you receive the following letter:

"SIR,

"When, on Wednesday last, I sent to your house my *humble* attempts, soliciting your attention in the *most respectful* language, I certainly did expect, in common courtesy, to have received, ere this, a reply. I am conscious that you have many engagements that *you* doubtless think of superior consequence to the task of reading *my* compositions; but there are others, sir, who have thought highly of what you apparently despise. But enough!—I beg you will *immediately* send back, by the bearer, ALL THE PAPERS which, trusting to your *reported* sympathy with men of letters, I had the folly to trouble you with. To *me* at least they are of importance.

"I am, sir,

"Your obedient servant,

"JOHN SAMUEL NOKES."

Send back the papers, by all means: Nokes would be still more offended by any apology for delay, or any excuse for not ultimately prevailing

on some bookseller to ruin himself by their publication. Nokes is a vindictive man, though he knoweth it not; nay, he esteemeth himself a very reservoir of the lacteal humanities. You may have served him essentially to-day; to-morrow you may have "wounded his feelings;" and, by next Saturday, be sure of a most virulent anonymous attack on you. But Nokes is to be more pitied than blamed: he is unfit for the world, only because he has no definite position in it.

Look now at a third species of literary men. Perhaps, dear——, you recollect Mr. Lofty: what a fine creature he is—how full of deep learning, of pure sentiment, of generous romance: how you would like him, if you could but know him—but *that* may never be!—He builds a wall between himself and other men. In the streets he walketh alone; he sitteth alone in the large arm-chair at the Athenæum; he refuseth to converse: he is a ruminative, but not a gregarious animal. His books are admirable; but, somehow or other, they are not popular—he writeth for himself, not mankind: he is not at his ease in society, even with literary men; he will not let out,—his mind is far away. He is tenderly benevolent, but frigidly unsocial: he would rather give you his fortune than take a walk with you. Hence, with all his genius, not knowing how to address mankind, and disdainful of the knowledge, he does not a tithe of the benefit that he might. Could he learn to co-ope-

rate with others, he might reform a world; but he saith with Milton, "The world that I regard is myself." Yet blame affects him sensibly—a hostile review wounds him to the quick: he telleth not his complaint, but it preys within: he knows himself to be undervalued: he is not jealous of lesser men's success, but he chafes at it—it is a proof of injustice to him: he is melancholic and despondent: he pines for the Ideal: he feels society is not made for the nobler aims, and sickens at the littleness of daily life: he has in him all the elements of greatness, but not of triumph: he will die with his best qualities unknown.

These are three specimens of the Literary Man, essentially different in most things, but having something in common, and formed alike by peculiarities in our social system.

CHAPTER III.

The feeling of Melancholy and Weariness; how engendered—We grow out of it with Age—The Philosophy of Idleness, its Sadness—A Reason why we are a Religious People.

From the tone of Society which I have attempted to describe, arises one of the most profound of our national feelings—that listless and vague melancholy which partakes both of the Philosophical and the Poetic; that sad and deep sentiment which is found only in the English and the German character, and is produced in each nation by the same causes; it is the result in both of an eager mind placed in a dull and insipid circle. (For in the small towns of Germany, society, if it possesses more wisdom than in England, does not proffer more charms.) A weariness of spirit creeps over us, and the flatness of the World produces somewhat the same moral result as the vanity of Knowledge. Hence, with the more intellectual of

our gentry, the roving and desultory thirst of travel. Unsatisfied desire, which they do not analyse, urges them on to escape from the "stale and unprofitable usages" of their native world. And among the rich of no other people do you so constantly find examples of the DISCONTENTED. This habit of mind, so unfortunate to the possessor, is not unfavourable to poetry: and though derived from the pettiest causes, often gives something of interest and nobleness to the character. But it is chiefly confined to the young: after a certain age we grow out of it; the soul becomes accustomed to the mill, and follows the track mechanically which it commenced in disgust."

But if there be one sentiment more mournful than another while it lasts, it is that conviction that All is Vanity which springs from the philosophy of Idleness; that craving for a sympathy which we never find, that restlessness of checked affection and crippled intellect, which belong to a circle in which neither affection nor intellect can be exerted. The little desires of petty circles irritate, but cannot absorb, the larger capacity of mind. One reason why we, above other nations, cling to the consolations of Religion is, that we have cultivated so sparingly the fascinations of the World.

As mankind only learnt the science of Naviga-

tion in proportion as they [redacted]
of the stars, so, in order to steer our [redacted]
through the seas of Life, we have fixed our hearts
upon the more sublime and distant objects of
Heaven.

CHAPTER IV.

Portrait of M——, an Exclusive Reformed—Causes of his Amelioration—Fashion has received a Shock—Opinions travel upward, Manners downward—View of Society in a Manufacturing Town—The Manufacturers and the Operatives—Cause in Customs for a Movement in Politics—Political Unions injurious to the Popular Cause.

I BREAKFASTED the other day with M——; you recollect that two years ago he was one of the supereminent of the Dandies; silent, constrained, and insolent; very scrupulous as to the unblemished character of his friends—*for ton*; affecting to call every thing "a bore," and, indeed, afraid to laugh, for fear of cracking himself in two. M—— is *now* the last man in the world one could thus describe. He talks, rattles, rubs his hands, affects a certain jollity of manner; wants you to think him a devilish good fellow; dresses, to be sure, as the young and the handsome are prone to dress—*selon les règles*; but you may evidently see that he does so mechanically; his soul is no longer in his clothes. He startled me too, by quoting Bacon. You know we never suspected he had so

much learning: but, between you and me, I think the quotation is a motto to one of the newspapers. However that be, M—— is evidently no longer indifferent as to whether you think he has information or not: he is anxious for your good esteem: he is overwhelmingly courteous and complimentary; he, who once extended the tip of his finger to you, now shakes you by both hands; it is not any longer M——'s fault if he is not agreeable; he strives to be so with might and main; and, in fact, he succeeds; it is impossible not to like such a gentlemanlike, good-looking, high-spirited fellow, when he once condescends to wish for your good opinion. His only fault is, that he is *too* elaborately off-hand, too stupendously courteous; he has not yet learned, like Will Honeycomb, "to laugh easily;" it will take him some little time to be good-natured spontaneously; howbeit, M—— is marvellously improved. After breakfast, we walked down St. James's Street; M—— has lost his old walk entirely; you recollect that he used to carry his eyes and nose in the air, never looking on either side of him, and seeming to drop upon your existence by accident. *Now* he looks round him with a cordial air, casts a frequent glance to the opposite side of the street, and seems mortally afraid lest he should by chance overlook some passing acquaintance. We met two or three plain-dressed, respectable-looking persons, the last people in the world whom M——

(you would say) could by possibility have known; M—— stops short, his face beaming with gratulation, shakes them by the hand, pulls them by the button, whispers them in the ear, and tears himself away at last with a "recollect, my dear sir, I 'm entirely at your service."

All this is very strange! what can possibly have wrought such a miracle in M——? I will tell you; M—— HAS NOW GOT CONSTITUENTS.

It is a profound observation in an Italian historian, that the courtesy of nobles is in proportion to the occasions imposed on them by the constitution, of mixing among the people. We do not want to be told that the Roman nobles in the times of the Republic were polished and urbane; that they practised all the seductions of manners; we ought to know this at once, by reading the method of their elections. M—— was in the House two years ago, when you recollect him; but he had never in his life seen the keeper, the butler, and the steward who returned him to Parliament. For the last twelve months M—— has been practising the familiar and the friendly to some three thousand electors in —— shire. The effort to please, at first necessary to him, has grown agreeable. He is getting into the habit of it. He *is in* for a large commercial town; he is the youngest, that is, the active, member; he is compelled to mix with men of all classes; how on earth can he continue to be an Exclusive? Do you

not perceive, therefore, dear ——, how much the operations of the Reform Bill will ultimately bear upon the tone of manners? Do you not perceive how much they have done so already? M—— is still the glass of fashion. Sliding, as he has done, into the temper of the times, his set imitate him now as they used to imitate him two years ago. Changed himself, he has inoculated a whole coterie. Thus laws and manners react upon each other.

We may perceive everywhere, indeed, that "Fashion" has received a material shock. If there is less fine gentlemanship than formerly, so also fine ladies are not quite so powerful as they were; they no longer fill the mouth of the gaping world with tales of triumphant insolence and abashed servility. A graver aspect settles on the face of society. The great events that have taken place have shaken the surface of the Aristocratic Sentiment too roughly, to allow it easily to resume its former state. Fashion cannot for many years be what it has been. In political quiet, the aristocracy are the natural dictators of society, and their sentiments are the most listened to. Now, the sum of their sentiments, as we have seen, is Fashion: in agitated times, the people rise into importance, and their sentiments become the loudest and most obtrusive; the aggregate of *their* sentiments, as we have seen, is Opinion. It is *then*, that unable to lead, the aristocracy uncon-

sciously follow the impulse, and *it becomes the fashion to be popular*. Hence may we date, if we descend to the philosophy of trifles, the innovations even in costume: and the spirit of the French Revolution, which breathed vainly through the massive eloquence of Fox, succeeded at least in sweeping away from our saloons the brocaded waistcoat and the diamond buckles. At the time of the discussions on Reform, our drawing-room gossips affected the tone of Birmingham liberalism; and the *élégans* of Parliament lisped forth sturdy dogmas on the "Rights of the People." Thus, while *social* habits descend from the upper to the lowest class, *political* principles, on the contrary, are reverberations of opinion travelling from the base to the apex of society. The Aristocracy form the Manners of Life, and the People produce the Revolutions of Thought.

This reflection leads us deeper into the subject before us. Let us transport ourselves from the metropolis to a manufacturing town, and see from what cause in the habits of social life the political sentiments of one class are forced on the acceptance of another.

There is a germ of truth in the Owenite principle of co-operation: Co-operation is power; in proportion as people combine, they know their strength; civilization itself is but the effect of combining. If, then, there are two classes, supposed to be antagonists to each other, and the members of

the one class combine more than those of another, the former class will be the more powerful; keep this truth in view—we shall apply it presently.

We are now at a manufacturing town; observe those respectable tradesmen—they are the master manufacturers—the aristocracy of the place. Look in that drawing-room, betraying the evidence of a decorous and honourable opulence; there is a little coterie assembled: yon short gentleman in blue is a retired captain in the navy: that portly personage, with the large bunch of seals, is the mayor of the town: yonder is a small proprietor, who has purchased a white house, and a few acres, and become a squire: that knot of confabulators is composed of the richest manufacturers of the place: at the other end of the room are the ladies, wives and daughters of the gentlemen. Enter a visiter in the town—a stray legislator, perhaps, who has come to see the manufactories; or, perhaps, like us, to know the men who work them: the gentlemen gather round him—a conversation ensues—he is anxious for general information—he speaks of the good sense and practical knowledge of a certain manufacturer he has visited that day.

"Ah, a good sort of a man, I believe," says the mayor, "and very clever at elections; but we seldom meet, except at a canvass—our wives don't visit ——."

There is a patronizing air about the magistrate as he says this—our stranger is surprised—he

turns to the rest—he perceives that he is praising somebody whom the company decidedly consider low and ungenteel; not one of their set. He finds, as conversation proceeds, that he is as much among exclusives as if he were at St. James's. The next day he dines with the manufacturer he praised—the household appurtenances are less elegant than those he witnessed the day before—the man-servant at the one house is a footboy at the other. He turns the conversation on his entertainer of the preceding day.

"Ay, a good sort of man," says his host, "but set up, full of prejudice and purse-pride."

"Yes," adds the hostess; "yet I recollect his wife's father kept a stall. She now has more airs than the member's lady, who is an earl's daughter."

Our stranger next speaks of a manufacturer of still less wealth and consequence than his entertainer.

"Oh," says his host, "a sharp fellow, but of coarse habits, and his opinions are *so* violent. He behaved very ill to Mr. ——, at the last election."

"And his wife," adds the lady, "is very angry with us; she wanted to go with *us* to the town balls—now you know, Mr. ——, that we must draw *some* distinction."

The conversation at each of these places turns little upon *theories* of politics; the Ministers are

talked over; perhaps also the history of the last election; the ladies discuss small scandals, the same as if they were at Almack's. Our stranger goes away; he finds these two houses a type of the general divisions of one class; yet, mark—this is one class—the Manufacturers, to which another class—the Operatives, suppose they have an antagonist interest.—

Our visiter now resolves to see something more of the other class—he attends a festive meeting of the Operatives, at the Blue Bear. It is a long room crowded to suffocation. His health is drunk—he makes a vague liberal speech—it is received with applause. An Operative is next called upon; he addresses the meeting—he begins with many apologies for his own incapacity, but gradually becoming assured, he reconciles himself and his audience to the task, by the recollection, that whatever his own deficiencies he is one of *them:* he is strengthened by the unanimity of their cause. "*We* Operatives," he says, (and the audience shout forth their sympathy and approbation,) "*we* are oppressed with taxes and unjust laws, but let us only be firm to each other, and we shall get redress at last. The people must help themselves—our rulers won't help us—Union is our watchword."

Such are the materials with which the orator works upon the sympathy of the audience; and as he progresses, he applies himself less to the small points than to the startling theories of poli-

ties. He touches little on party politics; much upon abstract principles; the necessity of knowledge, and the effects of education. What is the conclusion forced upon our stranger's mind? This: That where the one class was divided by small jealousies into a hundred coteries, the other class is consolidated into a powerful union: that where one class think little of the theories of politics, such speculations are ever present to the other—the staple matter of their meetings—the motive and the end of their association. Thus, fastening our attention to things below the surface, we perceive the true reason why Democratic Opinion must become more and more prevalent;—*its espousers are united!*—at each ensuing election they form a sturdy body, not to be detached from each other by isolated appeals—they must be gained by addressing the whole. If the manufacturers, therefore, desire to return a representative, they must choose a candidate *professing such sentiments* as are generally pleasing to this powerful body, viz, the class below them. Thus, unconsciously to themselves, they adopt the principles of their inferiors, whom they dread, and in returning what they call "their own member," return in reality the supporter of the doctrines of the operatives.*

* It is absurd to suppose (yet it is the commonest of suppositions) that if you keep *only* gentlemen and noblemen's sons in parliament, parliament is therefore less democratic than if al-

Two causes militate against the compact solidity of this democratic body; corruption is the first. But I apprehend that (even if the ballot be not obtained, which sooner or later it probably will be) with every succeeding election this cause will grow less and less powerful, in proportion as the truth forces itself on the mass, that each individual will gain more by the permanent reduction of taxes than by the temporary emolument of a bribe. By indisputable calculation, it can be shown that every working man is now taxed to the amount of one-third of his weekly wages; supposing the operative to obtain twelve shillings a week, he is taxed, therefore, to the amount of four shillings a week; at the end of six years (the supposed duration of parliament) he will, consequently, have contributed to the revenue, from his poor earnings, the almost incredible sum of 62*l.* 8*s.* What is any bribe that can be offered to him, in comparison to the hope of materially diminishing this mighty and constant expenditure! You may say the hope is vain—perhaps it is so—

loyed with Plebeians. It is the laws which are made, not the men who make them, that advance the democratic movement. If an earl's son pledge himself to certain measures, which act as a blow to the aristocracy, what could a mechanic do more? Does it signify whether you break down a wall by a plain pickaxe, or one with a coronet carved on the handle? The Romans obtained the power to choose plebeians, they chose patricians;—but the patricians they chose destroyed the aristocracy.

but he will always cherish and endeavour to realize it.

Credula vitam
Spes fovet, et fore cras semper ait melius.

Thus, the distress of the lower orders, hitherto the source of corruption, may become its preventive.

Another cause of division among the operatives, may be that which superficial politicians have considered the most dangerous cementer of their power, viz. "the establishment of Political Unions." If we look to the generality of towns,* we shall find that it is a very small proportion of even the ultra liberal party that have enrolled themselves in these associations. In fact, the Unions are regarded with jealousy; the men who originate them, the boldest and most officious of their class, are often considered by their equals as arrogant pretenders, assuming a dictatorship, which the vanity of the body at large is unwilling to allow. Hence, instead of uniting the mass, they tend to introduce divisions. Another effect they produce is, from

* Of course I do not here refer to the Unions in Birmingham and one or two other Towns—*there* they are indeed powerful in point of numbers—but I suspect they will fall by divisions among themselves.—(Addendum to Third Edition.) Since this work was first published many of the Political Unions have died—many more are dying—away. The Trades' Unions have greatly helped to dissolve the Political Unions. The working classes will not subscribe to *both*.

their paucity of numbers, to weaken the influence of the operatives, by showing a front of weakness, as well as an evidence of schism. The other classes are apt to judge of the strength of the party, by these its assumed host and army; and to estimate the numbers of persons professing the same opinions as Political Unions, by counting the names that these combinations have enrolled. A party to *be* strong, should always *appear* strong; the show often wins the battle; as the sultans of the East, in order to defeat rebellion, have usually found it sufficient merely to levy an army. I conceive, therefore, however excusable or useful such associations may be in a conflux of fierce and agitated events, they are, in a state of ordinary peace, as prejudicial * to the real power and solidity of the more popular party, as they are arro-

* Besides these consequences, their natural effect, if successful, would be the establishment of an oligarchy in every town. Two or three, not of the wisest men, but of the most active, and the most oratorical (the last quality is, in all popular assemblies, more dangerous than salutary—it has been ever so in Parliament) will gain possession of the assembly. In fact, these assemblies would operate by making in every town a machine for taking away the power of the many, and gratifying the ambition of the few. The greatest fear in an aristocratic country is, that the opposition of one aristocracy should be but the commencement of another. My principles are so generally known to be in favour of the people, that what I have said on this point will possibly have more weight than if I were a higher authority, but of a different party.

gant interferers with the proper functions of the government. There is only one just, natural, and efficacious Political Union—and that is the STATE —a State that shall at once rule and content the People ; — never *yielding* to their will, *because* always *providing* for their wants.

CHAPTER V.

THE SOCIAL HABITS OF THE POPULATION.

The Physical State of the Inhabitants of Manufacturing Towns—Proportion of Deaths in a Manufacturing and Agricultural District no Standard of the Proportion of Disease—The Childhood of the Poor—Extract from Elia—Evidence on the Factory Bill—Progress to Manhood—Artificial Stimulus—Noble Traits of the Operatives, Desires better than their Condition—Immorality, two Causes, Physical and Moral—Excess of early Labour should be restricted—National Education promoted—Poor-Laws are the History of the Poor—Indisposition to work, not want of it, is the cause of Pauperism—Evidence of the Truth of that Proposition—Fable of Ariel and Mephistopheles—The Aged worse off than the Able-bodied—Relief considered a Right—Pernicious influence of the Aristocracy—The Clergy vindicated—Public Charities, how prejudicial—Present Poor Laws deaden natural Affections of Parent and Child—Cause of Licentiousness—Inundations of the Irish—Remedies, difficulty of them exaggerated—Governments should be really *executive*, not merely *executional*—Outline of a proposed Reform in the Poor Laws—Concluding Remarks.

"MAN is born to walk erect, and look upon the heavens." So says the Poet. Man does not always fulfil the object of his birth; he goeth forth to his labour with a bending and despondent frame, and he lifts not his eyes from the soil whose

mire hath entered into his soul. The physical condition of the Working Classes in Manufacturing Towns is more wretched than we can bear to consider. It is not that the average of deaths in manufacturing towns is greater than that in the agricultural districts. The labourers in the latter are subject to violent and sudden diseases, proceeding from acute inflammation; medical assistance is remote, and negligently administered; their robust frames feed the disease that attacks them; they are striken down in the summer of their days, and die in the zenith of vigorous health. Not so with the Mechanic; he has medical aid at hand; acute disorders fall light on the yielding relaxation of his frame; it is not that he *dies sooner* than the labourer; he *lives more painfully*; he knows not what health is; his whole life is that of a man nourished on slow poisons; Disease sits at his heart, and gnaws at its cruel leisure. *Dum vivat, moritur.* The close and mephitic air, the incessant labour—in some manufactories the small deleterious particles that float upon the atmosphere,* engender painful and imbittering maladies, and afflict with curses, even more dread than are the heritage of literary application, the Student of the Loom. But it is not

* I have held correspondence on this point with some inhabitant or other in most of our manufacturing towns, and it seems that *nearly* all manufactories engender their peculiar disease.

only the diseases that he entails upon himself to which the Operative is subject; he bears in the fibre of his nerves and the marrow of his bones the terrible bequeathments of hereditary Affliction. His parents married under age, unfit for the cares, inadequate to the labours which a rash and hasty connexion has forced upon them;—each perhaps having resort to ardent spirits in the short intervals of rest,—the mother engaged in the toil of a factory at the most advanced period of her pregnancy;—every hour she so employs adding the seeds of a new infirmity to her unborn offspring!—

Observe the young mother, how wan and worn her cheek; how squalid her attire; how mean her home; yet her wages and those of her partner are amply sufficient, perhaps, to smooth with decorous comforts the hours of Rest, and to provide for all the sudden necessities of toiling life. A thriftless and slattern waste converts what ought to be competence into poverty, and, amidst cheerless and unloving aspects, the young victim is ushered into light. The early years of the Poor have been drawn by the hand of a master. I quote the description not only as being wholly faithful to truth, but as one of the most touching (yet least generally known) examples of the highest order of pathetic eloquence which Modern Literature has produced.

"The innocent prattle of his children takes out

the sting of a man's poverty. But the children of the *very* poor do not prattle! It is none of the least frightful features in that condition, that there is no childishness in its dwellings. Poor people, said a sensible old nurse to us once, do not *bring* up their children; they *drag* them up. The little careless darling of the wealthier nursery, in their hovel is transformed betimes into a premature reflecting person. No one has time to dandle it, no one thinks it worth while to coax it, to soothe it, to toss it up and down, to humour it. There is none to kiss away its tears. If it cries, it can only be beaten. It has been prettily said that 'a babe is fed with milk and praise.' But the aliment of this poor babe was thin, un-nourishing; the return to its little baby-tricks, and efforts to engage attention, bitter, ceaseless objurgation. It never had a toy, or knew what a coral meant. It grew up without the lullaby of nurses; it was a stranger to the patient fondle, the hushing caress, the attracting novelty, the costlier plaything, or the cheaper off-hand contrivance to divert the child; the prattled nonsense (best sense to it), the wise impertinences, the wholesome lies, the apt story interposed, that puts a stop to present sufferings, and awakens the passion of young wonder. It was never sung to—no one ever told to it a tale of the nursery. It was dragged up, to live or to die, as it happened. It had no young dreams. It broke at once into the iron realities of life. A

child exists not for the very poor as any object of dalliance; it is only another mouth to be fed, a pair of little hands to be betimes inured to labour. It is the rival, till it can be the co-operator, for food with the parent. It is never his mirth, his diversion, his solace; it never makes him young again, with recalling his young times. The children of the very poor have *no* young times. It makes the very heart to bleed to overhear the casual street-talk between a poor woman and her little girl, a woman of the better sort of poor, in a condition rather above the squalid beings which we have been contemplating. It is not of toys, of nursery books, of summer holidays (fitting that age); of the promised sight, or play; of praised sufficiency at school. It is of mangling and clear-starching, of the price of coals, or of potatoes. The questions of the child, that should be the very outpourings of curiosity in idleness, are marked with forecast and melancholy providence. It has come to be a woman, before it was a child. It has learned to go to market; it chaffers, it haggles, it envies, it murmurs; it is knowing, acute, sharpened; it never prattles. Had we not reason to say, that the home of the very poor is no home?" *

What homely and passionate pathos! I can do no homage to that critic who will not allow that I

* The Last Essays of Elia. Moxon, 1833.

have quoted one of the most striking masterpieces of English composition.

But if this be the ordinary state of the children of the poor, how doubly aggravated in the case of the *manufacturing* poor. What a dark and terrible history of early suffering is developed in the evidence on the Factory Bill. Let us take an instance:

EVIDENCE OF DAVID BYWATER.

Were you afterwards taken to the steaming department?—Yes.

At what age?—I believe I was turned thirteen then.

Is that a laborious employment?—Yes; we stood on one side and turned the cloth over, and then we had to go to the other side and turn the cloth over.

Were you there some time before you worked long hours?—Yes; but there was so much work beforehand that we were obliged to start night-work.

At what age were you when you entered upon that night-work?—I was nearly fourteen.

Will you state to this Committee the labour which you endured when you were put upon long hours and the night-work was added?—I started at one o'clock on Monday morning, and went on till twelve o'clock on Tuesday night.

What intervals had you for food and rest?—We started at one o'clock on Monday morning, and then we went on till five, and stopped for half an hour for refreshment; then we went on again till eight o'clock, at breakfast-time; then we had half an hour, and then we went on till twelve o'clock, and had an hour for dinner: and then we went on again till five o'clock, and had half an hour for drinking; and then we started at half-past five, and if we had a mind we could stop at nine and have half an hour then, but we thought it would be best to have an hour and a half together, which we might have at half-past eleven; so we went on from half-past five, and stopped at half-past eleven for

refreshment for an hour and a half at midnight; then we went on from one till five again, and then we stopped for half an hour; then we went on again till breakfast-time, when we had half an hour; and then we went on again till twelve o'clock, at dinner-time, and then we had an hour; and than we stopped at five o'clock again on Tuesday afternoon, for half an hour for drinking; then we went on till half-past eleven, and then we gave over till five o'clock on Wednesday morning.

* * * * * *

You say you were taken to be a steamer; are not very stout and healthy youths usually selected for that purpose?—Yes, the overlooker said he thought I should be the strongest.

When did you commence on Wednesday morning?—At five o'clock, and then we worked till eight o'clock, and then we had half an hour again; then we went on to dinner-time, and had an hour at twelve o'clock; and then at one o'clock we went on again till five, and then we had half an hour, and then we went on till half-past eleven again; and then we started again at one o'clock on Thursday morning, and went on till five o'clock; then we had half an hour, and then we went on till eight o'clock; we had half an hour for breakfast, and then we went on till twelve and got our dinner; then at one o'clock we went on till five o'clock, and then we had half an hour; then we went on till half-past eleven, and then we gave over till five o'clock on Friday morning; then we started again at five o'clock, and went on till eight; then we went on till dinner-time at twelve o'clock; then at one o'clock we went on till five; then we had half an hour, and then we went on till half-past eleven; then we started again at one o'clock on Saturday morning, and went on till five; then we had half an hour, and went on till eight; then we had half an hour for breakfast and went on till twelve; then we had an hour for dinner, and then went on from one o'clock till seven, or eight, or nine o'clock; we had no drinking-time on Saturday afternoon; we could seldom get to give over on the Saturday afternoon as the other people did.

* * * * *

You said that you was selected as a steamer by the overlooker,

on account of your being a stout and healthy boy?—Yes, he said he thought I was the strongest, and so I should go.

Were you perfect in your limbs when you undertook that long and excessive labour?—Yes, I was.

What effect did it produce upon you?—It brought a weakness on me; I felt my knees quite ache.

Had you pain in your limbs and all over your body?—Yes.

Show what effect it had upon your limbs.—It made me very crooked.—[Here the witness showed his knees and legs.]

Are your thighs also bent?—Yes, the bone is quite bent.

How long was it after you had to endure this long labour before your limbs felt in that way?—I was very soon told of it, before I found it out myself.

What did they tell you?—They told me I was getting very crooked in my knees; my mother found it out first.

What did she say about it?—She said I should kill myself with working this long time.

If you had refused to work those long hours, and have wished to have worked a moderate length of time only, should you have been retained in your situation?—I should have had to go home; I should have been turned off directly.

* * * * *

EVIDENCE OF ELDIN HARGRAVE.

In attending to this machine, are you not always upon the stretch, and upon the move?—Yes always.

Do you not use your hand a good deal in stretching it out?—Yes.

What effect had this long labour upon you?—I had a pain across my knee, and I got crooked.

Was it the back of your knee, or the side of your knee?—All round.

Will you show your limbs? [Here the witness exposed his legs and knees.]

Were your knees ever straight at any time?—They were straight before I went to Mr. Brown's mill.

* * * * *

You say that you worked for seventeen hours a day all the year round; did you do that without interruption?—Yes.

Could you attend any day or night-school?—No.

Can you write?—No.

Can you read?—I can read a little in a spelling-book.

Where did you learn that; did you go to a Sunday-school?—No, I had not clothes to go in.

* * * * *

EVIDENCE OF Mr. THOMAS DANIEL,

relative to the Boys called Scavengers.

You have stated that there is considerable difference in the ages of the children employed; are the younger, or older of the children employed, those that have to undergo the greatest degree of labour and exertion?—The younger.

Those you call scavengers?—Yes, scavengers and middle-piecers.

Will you state their average age?—The average age of scavengers will not be more than ten years.

Describe to the Committee the employment of those scavengers.—Their work is to keep the machines, while they are going, clean from all kinds of dust and dirt that may be flying about, and they are in all sorts of positions to come at them; I think that their bodily exertion is more than they are able to bear, for they are constantly kept in a state of activity.

Have they not to clean the machines, and to creep under, and run round them, and to change and accommodate their position in every possible manner, in order to keep those machines in proper order?—They are in all sorts of postures that the human body is capable of being put into, to come at the machines.

Are they not peculiarly liable to accidents then?—In many instances they are; but not so much now as they formerly were; spinners take more care and more notice of the children than they formerly did.

Do you think that they are capable of performing that work for the length of time that you have described?—Not without

doing them a serious injury with respect to their health and their bodily strength.

State the effect that it has upon them, according to your own observation and experience.—Those children, every moment that they have to spare, will be stretched all their length upon the floor in a state of perspiration, and we are obliged to keep them up to the work by using either a strap or some harsh language, and they are kept continually in a state of agitation; I consider them to be constantly in a state of grief, though some of them cannot shed tears; their condition greatly depresses their spirits.

They live in a state of constant apprehension, and often in one of terror?—They are always in terror; and I consider that that does them as much injury as their labour, their minds being in a constant state of agitation and fear.

You consider then, upon the whole, their state as one of extreme hardship and misery?—So much so, that I have made up my mind that my children shall never go into a factory, more especially as scavengers and piecers.

What do you mean by saying that those children are always in a state of terror and fear?—The reason of their being in a state of terror and fear is, that we are obliged to have our work done, and we are compelled therefore to use the strap, or some harsh language, which it hurts my feelings often to do, for I think it is heart-breaking to the poor child.

Do not you think that their labour is more aggravating to them at the end of the day?—I do; for we have to be more harsh with them at the latter part of the day than in the middle part of it. The greatest difficulty that we have to contend with in point of making them do their labour, is in the morning, and after four o'clock in the afternoon; the long hours that they have laboured the day before, in my opinion, cause them to be very stupid in the morning.

Have you observed them to be drowsy towards the after part of the day?—Very much so.

* * * * *

I could go on multiplying these examples * at

* But then, cry some pseudo-economists, on the Factory Bill we want farther inquiry. We have instituted farther inquiry

random, from every page of this huge calendar of childish sufferings; but enough has been said to convince the reader's understanding, and I would fain trust, to open his heart.

Thus prepared and seasoned for the miseries of life, the boy enters upon manhood—aged while yet youthful—and compelled, by premature exhaustion, to the dread relief of artificial stimulus. Gin, not even the pure spirit, but its dire adulteration—opium—narcotic drugs; these are the horrible cements with which he repairs the rents and chasms of a shattered and macerated frame. He marries; and becomes in his turn the reproducer of new sufferers. In afterlife he gets a smattering of political knowledge; legislative theories invite and lull him from himself; and with all the bitter experience of the present system, how can you wonder that he yearns for innovation?

In manufacturing towns, the intercourse between the sexes is usually depraved and gross. The number of illegitimate children is, I allow, proportionally less in a manufacturing, than in an

—for what? To prove that children can be properly worked above ten hours a day?—No, but to prove that the master manufacturers are slandered. Very well; that is quite another affair. Let us *first* do justice to those whom you *allow* to be overworked, and we will *then* do justice to those whom you *suppose* to be maligned. The great mistake of modern liberalism is, to suppose that a government is never to interfere, except through the medium of the tax-gatherer. A government should represent a parent; with us, it only represents a dun, with the bailiff at his heels!

agricultural district, but a most fallacious inference has been drawn from this fact; it has been asserted by some political economists, that sexual licentiousness is therefore less common among the population of the latter than that of the former—a mischievous error—the unchaste are not fruitful. The causes why illegitimate children are less numerous in manufacturing towns are manifold; of these I shall allude but to two (to the Quarterly Reviewers, so severe on Miss Martineau, a third may occur)—the inferior health of the women, and the desperate remedy of destroying the burden prematurely in the womb. The existence of these facts will be acknowledged by any one who has seen, with inquiring eyes, the *actual* state of the Manufacturing Population. The great evil of licentiousness is almost less in its influence on the Principles, than the Affections. When the passions are jaded and exhausted, the kindly feelings, which are their offspring, lie supine. The social charities, the household ties, the fond and endearing relations of wife and husband, mother and child, are not blessings compatible with a life of impure excitement. The Ancients tell us of a Nation of Harlots, who exposed their children:—the story may be false, but he who invented it, and showed how profligacy banished the natural affections, had studied with accuracy the constitution of the human mind.

Amidst these gloomier portraitures of our mechanic population, there are bright reliefs. Many of the Operatives have been warned, and not seduced, by the contagion of example; and of these I could select some who, for liberal knowledge, sound thought, kindly feeling, and true virtue, may rank among the proudest ornaments of the country. It has been my good fortune to correspond with many of the Operative Class, not only, as a member of parliament, upon political affairs, but in my prouder capacity, as a literary man, upon various schemes, which in letters and in science had occurred to their ingenuity. I have not only corresponded with these men, but I have also mixed personally with others of their tribe, and I have ever found that an acuteness of observation was even less the distinction of their character, than a certain noble and disinterested humanity of disposition. Among such persons I would seek, without a lantern, for the true Philanthropist. Deeply acquainted with the ills of their race, their main public thought is to alleviate and relieve them: they have not the jealousy common to men who have risen a little above their kind; they desire more "to raise the wretched than to rise;" their plots and their schemings are not for themselves, but for their class. Their ambition is godlike, for it is the desire to enlighten and to bless. There is a divine and sacred species of Ambition which is

but another word for Benevolence. These are they who endeavour to establish Mechanics' Institutes, and Plans of National Education; who clamour against Taxes upon Knowledge; who desire Virtue to be the foundation of Happiness. I know not, indeed, an order of men, more interesting our higher sympathies than that of which I speak; nor one that addresses more forcibly our sadder emotions, than that wider class which they desire to relieve.

The common characteristic of the Operatives, even amidst all the miseries and excesses frequent amongst them, is that of *desires better than their condition*. They all have the wish for knowledge. They go to the gin-shop, and yet there they discuss the elements of virtue! Apprenticed to the austerest trials of life, they acquire a universal sympathy with oppression. "Their country is the world." You see this tendency in all their political theories; it is from the darkness of their distress that they send forth the loud shouts which terrify Injustice. It is their voice which is heard the earliest, and dies the latest, against Wrong in every corner of the Globe; they make to themselves common cause with spoliated Poland—with Ireland, dragooned into silence—with the slaves of Jamaica—with the human victims of Indostan: wherever there is suffering, their experience unites them to it; and their efforts, unavailing for themselves, often contribute to adjust

the balance of the World. As (in the touching Arabian proverb) the barber learns his art on the orphan's face, so Legislation sometimes acquires its wisdom by experiments on Distress.

For the demoralized social state which I have ascribed to a large proportion of the Operatives, there are two cures, the one physical, the other moral. If you bow down the frame by the excess of early labour, the sufferers must have premature recourse to the artificial remedies of infirmity. Opium and gin are the cheapest drugs:* these corrupt the mind, and take reward from labour. Of what use are high wages, if they are spent in a single night? Children, therefore, should not be worked at too early an age, nor to too great an extreme. Women in the latter stages of child-bearing should not be permitted to attend the toil of the manufactories—they have no right to entail a curse on the Unborn. Legislation must not, it is true, *over* interfere; but she is a guardian, as well as an executioner: she may interfere to prevent, if she interferes to punish.

So much for the physical cure:—the moral cure is Education. National Schools, on a wide and comprehensive plan, embrace more than the elements of knowledge. (I shall enlarge upon this point in the next section of my work;) they

* See the account of the number of visiters to a gin-shop. Book I. p. 54.

ought to teach social, as well as individual morals; they ought to be adapted to the class to which they are dedicated; they should teach, not so much labour, as *habits* of labour; and bring up the young mind, especially the female mind, to the necessities of domestic economy. Labour schools * should be united to Intellectual. So far the Government can provide a cure. Individuals may assist it. The sexes should be, in all manufactories, even at the earliest age, carefully separated; and a master should demand a good moral character with those he employs. This last precaution is too generally neglected; a drunken, disorderly character is no barrier to the obtaining work; it is therefore no misfortune—if no misfortune, it is no disgrace. The best cure for demoralization is to establish a moral standard of opinion. To these remedies, add a revision of the Poor-laws for both classes, the manufacturing and the agricultural. After all, the remedies are less difficult than they appear to the superficial. But to a Government, nowadays, everything has grown difficult,—even the art of taxation.

The mention of the Poor-laws now links my inquiry into the social state of the manufacturing, with that of the agricultural, population. The

* Certain political economists opposed to the plan of labour schools have requested me to reconsider the principle on which I recommend them. I have done so only to be the more strongly persuaded of their utility.

operation of the Poor-laws is the History of the Poor. It is a singular curse in the records of our race, that the destruction of one evil is often the generation of a thousand others. The Poor-laws* were intended to prevent mendicants; they have made mendicancy a legal profession; they were established in the spirit of a noble and sublime provision, which contained all the theory of Virtue; they have produced all the consequences of Vice. Nothing differs so much from the end of institutions as their origin. Rome, the mother of warriors, was founded on a day consecrated to the goddess of shepherds. The Poor-laws, formed to relieve the distressed, have been the arch-creator of distress.

Of all popular suppositions, the most common among our philanthropical philosophers is, to believe that in England Poverty is the parent of Crime. This is not exactly the case. *Pauperism*

* The shallow politicians of the Senate tell you, with a pompous air, that the abolition of the monasteries was the only cause of Elizabeth's Poor-law. Why, did they ever read the old writers, poets, and chroniclers, before Elizabeth?—Did they ever read *Barclay's Eclogues*, descriptive of the state of the poor?—No, to be sure not. Did they ever read, then, the Acts of Parliament prior to Elizabeth?—One Act in Henry the Eighth's time, years before the monasteries were abolished, contains the germ of Poor-law, by confining the poor to their parishes, on the plea of the great increase of vagabonds and rogues. Did they ever read this?—Not they. Their province is to vote, not read.

is the parent of crime; but pauperism is not poverty. The distinction is delicate and important.

In the extracts from the information received by his Majesty's Commissioners as to the administration and operation of the Poor-laws, appears the following evidence, from Mr. Wontner, the governor of Newgate; Mr. Chesterton, the governor of the House of Correction for Middlesex; and Mr. Gregory, the treasurer of Spital-fields parish.

Mr. Wontner—"Of the criminals who come under your care, what proportion, so far as your experience will enable you to state, were by the *immediate pressure of want* impelled to the commission of crime? by want is meant, the absence of the means of subsistence, and not the want arising from indolence and an impatience of steady labour?—*According to the best of my observation, scarcely one-eighth.* This is my conclusion, not only from my observations in the office of governor of this gaol, where we see more than can be seen in court of the state of each case, but from six years' experience as one of the marshals of the city, having the direction of a large body of police, and seeing more than can be seen by the governor of a prison.

"Of the criminals thus impelled to the commission of crime by the immediate pressure of want, what proportion, according to the best of your experience, were previously reduced to want by heedlessness, indolence, and not by causes beyond the reach of common prudence to avert?—When we inquire into the class of cases to which the last answer refers, we generally find that the criminals have had situations and profitable labour, but have lost them in consequence of indolence, inattention, or dissipation, or habitual drunkenness, or association with bad females. *If we could thoroughly examine the whole of this class of cases, I feel confident that we should find that not one-thirtieth of the whole class of cases brought here are free from imputation of mis-*

conduct, or can be said to result entirely from blameless want. The cases of juvenile offenders from nine to thirteen years of age arise partly from the difficulty of obtaining employment for children of those ages, partly from the want of the power of superintendence of parents, who, being in employment themselves, have not the power to look after their children; and in a far greater proportion from the criminal neglect and example of parents."

Mr. Chesterton states, "I directed a very intelligent yardsman, and one who had never, I believe, wilfully misled me, to inquire into the habits and circumstances of all in the yard (sixty prisoners), and *the result was that he could not point out one who appeared to have been urged by want to commit theft.* It appears, that in the house of correction, the proportion of prisoners who have been paupers is more numerous than in the other gaols."

Mr. Richard Gregory, the treasurer of Spitalfields parish, who for several years distinguished himself by his successful exertions for the prevention of crime within that district, was asked—

"We understand you have paid great attention to the state and prevention of crime; can you give us any information as to the connexion of crime with pauperism?—I can state, from experience, that they invariably go together.

"*But do poverty—meaning unavoidable and irreproachable poverty—and crime invariably go together? That is the material distinction.* In the whole course of my experience, which is of twenty-five years, in a very poor neighbourhood, liable to changes subjecting the industrious to very great privations, I remember but one solitary instance of a poor but industrious man out of employment stealing any thing. I detected a working-man stealing a small piece of bacon;—he burst into tears, and said it was his poverty and not his inclination which prompted him to do this, for he was out of work, and in a state of starvation.

"*Then are we to understand, as the result of your experience, that the great mass of crime in your neighbourhood has always arisen from idleness and vice, rather than from the want of employment?—Yes, and this idleness and vicious habits are increased and fostered by pauperism, and by the readiness with which the*

able-bodied can obtain from parishes allowances and food without labour."

The whole of this valuable document on the Poor-laws generally bears out the evidence adduced above. Idleness and vice, then, are the chief parents of crime and distress; viz. indisposition to work, not the want of work. This is a great truth never to be lost sight of; for, upon a deduction to be drawn from it, depends the only safe principle of Parochial Reform. But how, in so industrious a country, arises the indifference to toil? The answer is obvious—wherever idleness is better remunerated than labour, idleness becomes contagious, and labour hateful. Is this the fact with us? Let us see; the following fable shall instruct us:

"The most benevolent of the angels was Eriel. Accustomed to regard with a pitying eye the condition of Mankind, and knowing (in the generous spirit of angelic philosophy) how much circumstance is connected with crime, he had ever wept over even the sufferings of the felon, and attempted to interfere with the Arch Disposer of events for their mitigation. One day, in walking over the earth, as was his frequent wont, he perceived a poor woman, with a child in her arms, making her way through a tattered and squalid crowd that thronged around the threshold of a certain house in the centre of a large town. Something in the

aspect of the woman interested the benevolent angel. He entered the house with her, and heard her apply to the overseers of the parish for relief: she stated her case as one of great hardship; to add to her distress, the infant in her arms was suffering under the fearful visitation of the smallpox. The overseers seemed ready enough to relieve her—all the overseers, save one; *he* sturdily stood out, and declared the woman an impostor.

"This is the fourth child," quoth he, "that has been brought to us this day as suffering under the smallpox; there is not, I am sure, so much disease in the village. Come hither, my good woman, and let us look at your infant."

The mother seemed evidently reluctant to expose the seamed and scarred features of the child—"It is maternal vanity, poor creature!" whispered the kind heart of the angel.

She showed the arm and the leg, and the stamp of the disease was evidently there, *but the face!*—it would disturb the little sufferer—it would shock the good gentleman—it might spread the disease. What was the good of it? The hard overseer was inexorable; he lifted the handkerchief from the child's face—"I thought so!" quoth he, in triumph, "Go, my good woman—*the child is not your own!*"—The woman quailed at the overseer's look; she would have spoken, but she only cried; she slunk into the crowd and disappeared. The fact came out, *the child was a borrowed commodity!*

it had been shifted from matron to matron: now its face had been shown, now only its hand; its little pustules had been an India to the paupers. The hard overseer was a very Solomon in his suspicion.

Now, in witnessing this scene, one remarkable occurrence had excited the astonishment of the angel; he perceived standing behind the Parochial Authorities no less a personage than the celebrated demon Mephistopheles; and, instead of steeling the hearts of the official judges, he remarked that the Fiend whispered charity and humanity to them, whenever any doubt as to the appropriate exercise of those divine virtues arose within their breasts. Struck by this inconsistency in demoniacal traits, when the assembly broke up, Eriel accosted the Fiend, and intimated his surprise and joy at his apparent conversion to the principles of benevolence. Every one knows that Mephistopheles is a devil, so fond of his sneer, that he will even go out of his way to indulge it. He proposed to the angel to take a walk and chat over the sentiments of harmony; Eriel agreed, they walked on, arguing and debating, till they came to a cottage, which struck the ramblers as unusually neat in its appearance; they assumed their spiritual prerogative of invisibility, and, crossing the threshold, they perceived a woman of about thirty years of age, busying herself in household matters, while her husband, a sturdy labourer, was partaking with

two children a frugal meal of coarse bread and mouldy cheese. About the cottage and its inmates was a mingled air of respectability and discontent. "My poor boy," quoth the labourer to his son, "you can have no more; we must set the rest by for supper."

"It is very hard, father," grumbled the boy, "we work all day and are half starved, and Joe Higgins, who is supplied by the parish, works little and is well fed."

"Yes, boy, but thank God we are *not* on the parish yet," said the mother, turning round, with a flush of honest pride.

The father sighed and said nothing.

When the meal was done the peasant lingered behind to speak to his wife.

"It is very true, Jane," said he, "that we have been brought up in a spirit of independence, and do not like to go to the parish, but where 's the good of it? Jack 's perfectly right. There 's Higgins does not do half what we do, and see how comfortable he is: and, you know, we are ratepayers, and absolutely pay for *his* indolence. This is very discouraging, Jane; I see it is spoiling my boys for work; depend on't we can't be better than our neighbours; we must come on the parish, as all of them do."

So saying, the father shook his head and walked out.

The poor wife sat down and wept bitterly.

"This is a very, very sad case!" said Eriel; Mephistopheles grinned.

Our wanderers left the cottage and proceeded on their walk; they came to another cottage, of a slatternly and dirty appearance; the inmates also were at dinner, but they were much better off in point of food, though not in point of cleanliness. "I say, Joe Higgins," quoth the dame of the cottage, "this bacon is not half so good as they get at the workhouse. There 's my sister and her two brats does not do no work, and they has beef every Sunday."

"And all the men," interrupted Joe, "has three pints of beer a day; spose we makes a push to get in?"

"With all my heart," said the wife, "and the overseers be mighty kind gemmen."

The Immortal Visiters listened no more; they resumed their journey, and they came to the Poor-house: here all was sleek indolence and lazy comfort; the parochial authorities prided themselves on *buying the best of every thing*. The Paupers had vegetables, and beer, and bread; and the children were educated at the parish pauper school. Nevertheless, as our visiters listened and looked on, they found that Discontent could enter into even this asylum of untasked felicity. They overheard a grim and stalwart pauper whispering to some three or four young and eager listeners, "Arter all, you sees we be not so well off as my

brother Tom, what is a convict in the hulks yonder. And you sees, if we *do* do that ere job what I spoke to you about, we should only be sent to the hulks, and be then as well fed and as easy as brother Tom himself."

The three lads looked at each other, and the Immortals perceived by the glance, that the "job" would be soon done.

"Perhaps now, Mr. Eriel," said Mephistopheles with a sneer, "you see why I strove to soften the hearts of the overseers."

"Alas! yes," replied the Angel sorrowfully, "and I see also that there is no fiend like a mistaken principle of Charity."

This fable is but the illustration of stern fact.

'The following table drawn chiefly from official returns, will show clearly, and at a glance, the comparative condition of each class, as to food, from the honest and independent labourer to the convicted and transported felon. For better comparison, the whole of the meat is calculated as cooked.'

THE SCALE.

I. The Independent Agricultural Labourer—

According to the returns of Labourers' Expenditure, they are unable to get, in the shape of solid food, more than an average allowance of	oz.	
Bread (daily) 17 oz. = per week	119	
Bacon, per week	4 oz.	
Loss in cooking	1 „	Solid Food
	—	3—122 oz.

II. The Soldier—

		oz.
Bread (daily) 16 oz. =	per week	112
Meat 12	84 oz.	
Loss in cooking	28 „	Solid Food
	—	56—168

III. The Able-bodied Pauper—

Bread	per week	98
Meat	31 oz.	
Loss in cooking	10 „	
	—	21
Cheese		16
Pudding		16—151

In addition to the above, which is an average allowance, the inmates of most workhouses have,

Vegetables	48 oz.
Soup	3 quarts.
Milk Porridge	3 „
Table Beer	7 „

and many other comforts.

IV. The Suspected Thief—

(See the Goal Returns from Lancaster.)

Bread	per week	112
Meat	24 oz.	
Loss in cooking	8 „	
	—	16
Oatmeal		40
Rice		5
Pease		4
Cheese		4—181

Winchester:

		oz.
Bread	per week	192
Meat	16 oz.	
Loss in cooking	5 „	
	—	11—203

V. The Convicted Thief—

Bread . . .	per week .	140	
Meat	56 oz.		
Loss in cooking .	18 „		
	—	38	
Scotch Barley . . .		28	
Oatmeal		21	
Cheese		12	—239

VI. The Transported Thief—

10½ lbs. meat per week =	168 oz.		
Loss in cooking .	56 „		
	—	112	
10½ lbs. flour, which will increase, when made into bread .		218	—330

" So that the industrious labourer has less than the pauper, the pauper less than the suspected thief, the suspected thief less than the convicted, the convicted less than the transported, and by the time you reach the end of the gradation, you find that the transported thief has nearly three times the allowance of the honest labourer!"

What effect then must those laws produce upon our social system, which make the labourer rise by his own degradation, which bid him be ambitious to be a pauper and aspire to be a convict!

Perhaps, however, you console yourself with the notion, that at all events our Poor-laws provide well and comfortably for the decline of life; that whatever we throw away upon the sturdy and robust pauper, we afford at least, in the spirit of the original law, a much better provision for the aged and infirm. Alas! it is just the reverse; *it*

is the aged and infirm who are the worst off. Here is one parallel, among many, between the two classes; Joseph Coster, aged thirty-four, and Anne Chapman, a widow, aged seventy-five, are of the same parish. Joseph Coster, in the prime of life, receives from the parish no less than 43*l.* 6*s.* 8*d.* per year, or 16*s.* 8*d.* per week; Anne Chapman, the *decrepit widow*, 1*s.* 6*d.* *a week, or* 3*l.* 18*s.* *a year!* So much for the assistance really afforded to the aged.

And why does the sturdy young man obtain more than the aged and helpless?—1st, Because he may be violent; he can clamour, he can threaten, he can break machines, and he can burn ricks. The magistrates are afraid of *him;* but the old and helpless are past fearing. 2dly, Because *he* has been reckless and improvident, he has brought children into the world without the means of maintaining them, and it is well to encourage private improvidence by public pay. 3dly, Because *he* is paid his wages out of the poor-rates—the consequence of which, vitiating his industry itself, takes from labour its independence, and degrades all poverty into pauperism. It often happens that employment is given rather to the pauper than the independent labourer, because it eases the parish; and *labourers* have absolutely reduced themselves to pauperism in order to be employed.

Do not let us flatter ourselves with the notion

that these laws bind the poor to the rich; that the poor consider parish relief as charity.—No, they consider it as a right,—a right which they can obtain, not by desert, but worthlessness; not by thrift, but extravagance; not by real distress, but by plausible falsehood. A shoemaker at Lambeth swore he could only earn thirteen shillings a week—he applied for parish relief—an overseer discovered that he made thirty shillings a week, and the supply was refused. "It is a d—d hard case," quoth the shoemaker, "it was as good to me as a freehold—I've had it these seven years!"

And now it is my duty to point out to the reader one important truth. How far may it safely be left to individuals to administer and provide individual remedies? If ever—you would imagine at first—if ever there was an Aristocracy, which by its position ought to remedy the evils existent among the poorer population in the provinces, it is ours:—unlike the *noblesse* of other countries, they are not congregated only at the capital, they live much in the provinces; their grades of rank are numerous, from the peer to the squire; they spread throughout the whole state; they come in contact with all classes; they are involved in all country business; they have great wealth; they can easily obtain practical experience—would you not say they are the very men who would most naturally, and could most successfully, struggle against the abuses that, while

they demoralize the poor, menace the rich? Alas! it is exactly the reverse: the influence of the Aristocracy, in respect to those within the operation of the Poor-laws, has only been not pernicious, where it has been supine and negative. Among the great gentry, it is mostly the latter—their influence is neglect; among the smaller gentry, it is the former—their influence has been destruction!

I take an instance of this fact in the parish of Calne. Its neighbour and main proprietor is the Marquis of Lansdowne, a man rich to excess; intelligent, able—a political economist—his example, activity, and influence, might *have done* much—his interest was *to do* much—to correct the pauperism of his neighbourhood, and to enlighten the surrounding magistrates and overseers. Well, the parish of Calne is most wretchedly, most *ignorantly*, administered; it is one of the strongest instances of abuse and mental darkness in the Evidence of the Poor-law Commissioners.

So much for the influence of your great noble. Now see, in the same borough, the far more pernicious influence of your magistrate. The magistrates have established the scale system; viz. have insisted on paying the wages of labour out of the parish; the evil effects of this we have already seen. The assistant overseer, and the other parish officers of Calne, allowed that no attention whatever was paid to character; to the most notorious

drunkards, swearers, and thieves, the magistrates equally insisted on the application of their blessed scale;—the demands on the parish were made with insolence and threats. The Commissioner inquires if the parish officers never took these men to the bench for punishment. "Yes, they had, but had been so often reprimanded, and triumphed over, that they had given it up."

"Thus," adds the Commissioner, "with the appearance of no appeal to the magistrates, the magisterial (viz. the aristocratic) influence is unbounded, complete, and *by tacit consent, always in exercise, and ever producing evils of the greatest magnitude and the worst description.*"*

Wherever the magistrates interfere, the interference is always fatal;—they support, out of an ungenerous fear, or a foolish pride of authority, or at best a weak and ignorant charity, the worst and most vicious characters, in opposition to the remonstrances of the parochial officers—they appoint the scale of allowance by which they pauperize whole districts—afraid of the vengeance of the rickburner, they dare not refuse (even if they wish it) allowance to the pauper. Wherever they

* "The district of Sturminster Newton is the worst regulated as to poor-concerns, with the highest proportionate rates in the county;—in no district is there so much magisterial interference."—*Mr. Okeden's Report.* I might accumulate a thousand instances in support of this general fact, but it is notorious.

interfere, rates rise as by a miracle, and the parish falls into decay. It is they who, to aid a temporary policy in Pitt's time, persuaded the poor that it was no disgrace to apply to the parish—it is they who engendered and support the payment of wages from rates—the allowance of relief to the able-bodied—in other words, it is they who, in these two abuses, have produced the disease we are now called upon to cure. Wherever they do not interfere, the malady is comparatively slight.

Stratford-upon-Avon, says Mr. Villiers, is the only place in the division not subject to the jurisdiction of the county magistrates, and the only one where it is said the rate-payers are not dissatisfied. In Poole, a large and populous town, magisterial influence is unknown—all that relates to the government of the poor is excellent.* Moore Critchell, Devizes, Marlborough, are similar examples.

Enough of these facts.—I have made out my case. Individual and local influence has been

* Some faint, though unsuccessful, attempt has been made to throw suspicion upon the Report of these Commissioners. It may be possible that the Commissioners have been mistaken in one or two details or calculations; even so, the *principles* they have established would be still untouched. *In truth*, the Commissioners have not made a single discovery, they have only classified and enforced the discoveries we had already made. I quote *illustrations* from their Report, as being the most recent work on the subject—the facts will remain notorious, however you may wrangle with the illustrations.

usually pernicious, and it follows, therefore, that in any reform of the Poor-laws, the first principle will be to leave nothing to the *discretion* of that Influence.

Before I pass on to another view of my subject, let me pause one moment to do justice to a body of men, whom, in these days of party spirit, it requires some courage in a legislator professing liberal opinions to vindicate, and whom, in the progress of this work, it will be again my duty and my pleasure to vindicate from many ignorant aspersions—I mean the Clergy of the Establishment. I exempt them in general from the censure to be passed on the magistrates. A certain jealousy between the parson and the squire has often prevented the latter from profiting by the experience of the former, and led to combinations on the bench to thwart the superior enlightenment of of the Clerical influence. We shall find various instances in which an active and intelligent minister has been the main reformer of his parish, and the chief corrector of the obstinacy of the magistrate and the sloth of the overseer. But in very few of these instances shall we find the clergyman a scion of the Aristocracy.

A book lies open before me, which ascribes to our Aristocracy many of our Public Charities. What impudence! — most of them have been founded by persons sprung from the people. The author rejoices over the fine names in the list of

patrons to such institutions — Let him! — One thing is perfectly clear, that Public Charities may be administered and regulated with greater sagacity than they are. Let us take a survey of these Institutions — it will perhaps interest, and certainly instruct us.

The system of Public Charities, however honourable to the humanity of a nation, requires the wisest legislative provisions not to conspire with the Poor-laws to be destructive to its morals. Nothing so nurtures virtue as the spirit of independence. The poor should be assisted undoubtedly — but in what — *in providing for themselves*... Hence the wisdom of the Institution of Savings Banks. When taught to lean upon others, Poverty becomes only a burden upon industry. The Reverend Mr. Stone has illustrated this principle in a vein of just and felicitous humour. He supposes a young weaver of twenty-two marrying a servant-girl of nineteen. Are they provident against the prospects of a family — do they economise — toil — retrench? — No: they live in Spitalfields, and rely upon *the Charitable Institutions.* The wife gets a ticket for the "Royal Maternity Society,"—she is delivered for nothing—she wants baby-linen—the Benevolent Society supply her. The child must be vaccinated—he goes to the Hospital for Vaccination. He is eighteen months old, "he must be got out of the way;" he goes to the Infant school;—from

thence he proceeds, being "distressed," to the Educational Clothing Society, and the Sunday Schools.—Thence he attains to the Clothing Charity Schools. He remains five years—he is apprenticed gratis to a weaver—he becomes a journeyman—the example of his parents is before his eyes—he marries a girl of his own age—his child passes the ancestral round of charities—his own work becomes precarious—but his father's family was for years in the same circumstances, and was always saved by charity; to charity, then, he again has recourse. Parish gifts of coals, and parish gifts of bread are at his disposal. Spitalfields Associations, Soup Societies, Benevolent Societies, Pension Societies—all fostering the comfortable luxury of living gratuitously—he comes at length to the more fixed income of parish relief—"he *begs* an extract from the parish register, proves his settlement by the *charity-school indenture of apprenticeship*, and quarters his family on the parish, with an allowance of five shillings a week. In this uniform alternation of voluntary and compulsory relief he draws towards the close of his mendicant existence. Before leaving the world, he might, perhaps, return thanks to the public. He has been *born for nothing*—he has been *nursed for nothing*—he has been *clothed for nothing*—he has been *educated for nothing*—he has been *put out in the world for nothing*—he has had *medicine and medical attendance for nothing*;

and he has had his children also *born, nursed, clothed, fed, educated, established, and physicked—for nothing!*

"There is but one good office more for which he can stand indebted to society, and *that* is his Burial! He dies a parish pauper, and, at the expense of the parish, he is provided with shroud, coffin, pall, and burial-ground; a party of paupers from the workhouse bear his body to the grave, and a party of paupers are his mourners."*

Thus we find, that Public Charities are too often merely a bonus to public indolence and vice. What a dark lesson of the fallacy of human wisdom does this knowledge strike into the heart! What a waste of the materials of kindly sympathies! What a perversion individual mistakes can cause, even in the virtues of a nation! Charity is a feeling dear to the pride of the human heart—it is an aristocratic emotion! Mahomet testified his deep knowledge of his kind when he allowed the vice hardest to control,—sexual licentiousness; and encouraged the virtue easiest to practise,—charity.

* "I wish it to be particularly understood," Mr. Stone then adds, "that in thus describing the operation of charity in my district, I have been giving an *ordinary*, and not an *extra*ordinary, instance. I might have included many other details; some of them of a far more aggravated and offensive nature. I have contented myself, however, with describing the state of the district as regards charitable relief, and the extent to which that relief *may be*, and actually *is* made to minister to *improvidence and dependence*."

The effect of the last is, in the East, productive of most of the worst legislative evils in that quarter of the globe; it encourages the dependant self-reconciliation to slavery, and fosters the most withering of theological fallacies—predestination.

The effects of the Poor-laws on the social system are then briefly these;—they encourage improvidence, for they provide for its wants; they engender sexual intemperance, for they rear its offspring; by a necessary reaction, the benefits conferred on the vicious pauper, become a curse on the honest labourer.* They widen the breach between the wealthy and the poor, for compulsory benevolence is received with discontent;—they deaden the social affections of the labourer, for his children become to him a matter of mercantile speculation. "An instance," says Mr. Villiers, speaking from his experience in the county of Gloucester, "was mentioned, of a man who had lately lost all his children, saying publicly, that it was a sad thing for him, for he had lost his parish pay, *and that had his children lived he should have been well to do.*"

Another instance of their operation, not on paternal, but filial affection, is recorded by Dr. Chalmers, in his work on Civic Economy. "At Bury, in Lancashire," saith he, "some very old

* The merit of the origin of Public Hospitals has been inconsiderately ascribed to Christianity. It was the Druids who founded hospitals—they also sacrificed human flesh!

out-pensioners, who had been admitted as inmates to the *poor-house*, with the families of their own children, often preferred the workhouse, because, on purpose to get altogether *quit of them, their children made them uncomfortable.*"

"I have been frequently at vestry-meetings," said Mr. Clarkson, some years ago, "where I have told the father, '*Your* children are *yours.*' The answer has always been, '*No, they belong to the parish!*' No one can beat it into their heads that their own children belong to them, not to the parish."—The parish is mightily obliged to them!

If the Poor-laws operate thus on the social ties, they are equally prejudicial to the sexual moralities. In the rural districts, a peasant-girl has a child first, and a husband afterwards. One woman in Swaffham, Norfolk, had seven illegitimate children; she received 2*s.* a-head for each: had she been a widow, with seven legitimate children, she would have received 4*s.* or 5*s.* less. An illegitimate child is thus 25 per cent. more valuable to a parent than a legitimate one. It is considered a very good speculation to marry a lady with a fortune of one or two pledges of love.

"I requested," says Mr. Brereton, of Norfolk, in an excellent pamphlet, published some time ago, on the Administration of the Poor-laws—"I requested the governor of a neighbouring hundred-house to furnish me with the number of children born within a certain period, distinguishing the

legitimate from the illegitimate. The account was 77 children born:—23 legitimate, 54 *il*legitimate:" viz. the illegitimate children were more than double the number of the legitimate.

The Poor-laws, administered as at present through the southern parts of the Island, poison morality, independence, and exertion;—the encouragers, the propagators, and the rewarders of Pauperism. To these evils we must add those incurred by the Laws of Settlement.* At present, if there is no labour in one parish, instead of transferring the labourer to another, you chain him to the soil as a pauper. Nor must we forget the mischievous and contagious example of the itinerant vagabonds from Ireland. These Hibernian adventurers, worthy successors of the fierce colonisers of old, are transported in myriads by the blessed contrivance of steam, into a country where "to relieve the wretched is our pride:" with much greater capacities for omnipossession than the English labourer, whom the laws of settlement chain to his parish—they spread themselves over the whole country; and wherever they are settled at last, they establish a dread example of thriftless, riotous, unimprovable habits of pauperism. They remind us of the story of a runaway couple,

* See an excellent exposition of these absurd laws in an able letter to Lord Brougham on the Poor-laws, by Mr. Richardson, of Norfolk. In one parish, cited by him, the expense of trying the settlement of one pauper amounted to 71*l.* 2*s.* 4*d.*

who were married at Gretna Green. The smith demanded five guineas for his services. "How is this?" said the bridegroom, "the gentleman you last married assured me that he only gave you a guinea."

"True," said the smith, "but *he* was an Irishman. I have married him six times. *He is a customer. You* I may never see again."

The parish overseers adopt the principle of the smith, and are mighty lenient to the Irishman, who walks the world at his pleasure, and laughs at the parish labourer. He goes to a thousand parishes —he is relieved in all—*he is a customer.*

But what are the remedies for these growing evils? Every one allows the mischief of the present Poor-laws; puts his hands in his pockets, and says, "But what are we to do?" This is ever the case; men suffer evils to surround them, and then quarrel with every cure. There is an impatient cowardice in the spirit of Modern Legislation, which, seeing difficulties on all sides, thinks only of the difficulty of removing them. But, in fact, by a vigorous and speedy reform, the worst consequences of the Poor-laws may be arrested—the remedies are not so difficult as they seem. This truth is evident, from numerous instances in which the energy of select vestries—or even the skilful exertions of an individual—by sturdily refusing relief to able-bodied labourers without work, by a severely regulated workhouse, which no inmate

might leave without an order; and by a general rejection of out-of-door relief;—have succeeded in redeeming whole parishes from pauperism; in reducing the rates in an incredibly short time, to a third of their former amount; and in raising the prostrate character of the pauper to the moral standard of the industrious and independent labourer. This is an undeniable proof, then, that remedies are neither very difficult, nor even very slow, in their operation. But—mark this—the remedies depended on the *rare* qualities of great judgment, great firmness, and great ability, of individuals.

No wise government will trust remedies so imperiously demanded to the *rare* qualities of individuals. There is a general inertness in all parochial bodies, I may add in all communities that share an evil disguised under plausible names. In some places the magistrate will not part with power, in other places the farmer deems it a convenience to pay wages from the poor-rates; in some districts the sturdy insolence and over-grown number of paupers intimidate reform, in others the well-meant charity of Lady Bountifuls perpetuates immorality under the title of benevolence. Were the evil to be left to parishes to cure, it would go on for half a century longer, and we should be startled from it at last by the fierce cries of a Servile War.* The principle of legislation in

* The slow growth of each individual and unassisted reform, is visible by comparing the instances mentioned by Dr. Chal-

this country has long been that merely of punishing—the proper principle is prevention. A good government is a *directive government*. It should be in advance of the people—it should pass laws *for* them, not receive all law *from* them. At present we go on in abuses until a clamour is made against them, and the government gives way; a fatal policy, which makes a weak legislature and a turbulent people. *A government should never give way*—it should never place itself in a condition to give way *—it should provide for changes ere they are fiercely demanded, and by timely diversions of the channels of opinion prevent the possibility of an overflow. When a government acts thus, it is ever strong—it never comes in con-

mers seven years ago, with the recent ones specified in the Report of the Poor-law Commissioners; the proportion of reform appears even to have decreased. A curious proof of general supineness may be found in Cookham parish. By a change of system, that parish has most materially improved its condition. *It is surrounded by other parishes suffering all the agonies of the old system; yet not one of them has followed so near and unequivocal an example!*—I allow, however, that we must not suppose the whole kingdom to be in the same situation as the districts visited by the Poor-law Commissioners. In the north of the island, the worst abuses of the system are not found.—But if those abuses *did* exist everywhere, it would be of no use *writing* against them—cure would be impracticable—it is precisely *because* the evil is as yet partial, that we should legislate for it in earnest; because now we can legislate with effect.

* Nothing destroyeth authority so much as the unequal and untimely interchange of power pressed too far and relaxed too much.—*Bacon on Empire.*

tact with the people—it is a directive government, not a conceding one, and procures the blessings of a free constitution by the vigour of a despotic one.

The Government, then, should now take the sole management of the Poor into its own hands. That the present laws of settlement must be simplified and reduced, every one grants; the next step should be the appointment of a Board intrusted with great discretionary powers, for in every parish has been adopted, perhaps, a different system requiring a different treatment—the same laws cannot be applicable to every parish. The number of commissioners cannot be too small, because the less the number the less the expense, and the greater the responsibility;—the greater the responsibility the more vigorous the energy.*

These commissioners should of course be paid —gratuitous work is bad work, and the smallness of their number would make the whole expense of so simple a machinery extremely small.

Those parishes too limited in size to provide work for all the able-bodied, and in which consequently pauperism is flagrant and advancing,

* They might have power to obtain assistant commissioners subordinate to them, if necessary. In a conversation I have had with an eminent authority on this head, it was suggested that these assistant commissioners should be itinerant. They would thus be freed from the local prejudices of the magistrates, and enabled to compare the various modes of management in each district.

should be merged into larger districts. For my own part, unless (which I do not believe) a violent opposition were made to the proposal, I should incline to a general enlargement and consolidation of all the parishes throughout the kingdom.

The principal machinery of reform should lie in the discipline of the workhouse. It is a fact at present, that where the comforts at a workhouse exceed those of the independent labourer, pauperism increases; but where the comforts at the workhouse have been reduced below those of the independent labourer, pauperism has invariably and most rapidly diminished. On this principle all reform must mainly rest. A workhouse *must be a house of work, requiring severer labour and giving less remuneration than can be obtained by honest competition elsewhere.*

The asylums for the aged and the infirm should, on the contrary, be rendered sufficiently commodious to content, though not so luxurious as to tempt, the poor. There may well be a distinction between the house for labour to the idle, and that of rest for the exhausted.

The Board shall make and publish an Annual Report; this Report will be the best mirror of the condition of the Poor we can obtain, and the publication of their proceedings will prevent abuse and stimulate improvement. The Board, by the aid of its assistant commissioners, would supersede the expensive necessity of many special Parlia-

mentary commissions, and would be always at hand to afford to the Government or to Parliament any information relative to the labouring classes.

That such a Board may finally be made subservient to more general purposes, is evident.* Its appointment would be popular with all classes,

* I mention *Recruiting* as one. At present, as we have before seen, nothing in the army requires so much reform as the system of recruiting it. A Central Board with its branch commissioners, with its command over the able-bodied applicants for work, might be a very simple and efficacious machine for supplying our army—not, as now, from the dregs of the people—but from men of honesty and character. The expense of our present system of recruiting is enormous—it might in a great measure be saved by a Central Board. Emigration is, of course, another purpose to which it might be applied. Is it true that population presses on capital? In this country it assuredly does, the area of support is undeniably confined—meanwhile the population *increases*. Very well, we know exactly how many to remove. Mr. Wakefield has settled this point in an admirable pamphlet. He takes the British population at twenty millions; he supposes that their utmost power of increase would move at the rate of four per cent. per annum, the constant yearly removal of the percentage, viz. 800,000, would prevent any domestic increase. But of these 800,000 you need select only those young couples from whom the increase of population will proceed—these amount to 400,000 individuals—the expense of removing them at 10*l.* a head, is four millions a year. *We now therefore know exactly what it will cost to prevent too great a pressure of the population on the means of subsistence!* But what individual emigration-companies can either preserve the balance, or persuade the people to accede to it? Is not this clearly the affair of the state, as in all ancient polity it invariably was? See the evidence before the Emigration Committee of 1827, and the intelligent testimony of Mr. Northhouse.

save, perhaps, the Paupers themselves—it would save the country immense sums—it would raise once more in England the pride of honest toil.

It is time that a Government so largely paid by the people should do something in their behalf. "The Poor shall be with you always," are the pathetic words of the Messiah; and that some men must be poor and some rich, is a dispensation, with which, according to the lights of our present experience, no human wisdom can interfere. But if legislation cannot prevent the inequalities of poverty and wealth, it is bound to prevent the legislative *abuse* of each;—the abuse of riches is tyranny; the corruption of poverty is recklessness. Wherever either of these largely exist, talk not of the blessings of free Institutions, *there* is the very principle that makes servitude a curse. Something is, indeed, wrong in that system in which we see "Age going to the workhouse, and Youth to the gallows." But with us the evil hath arisen, not from the malice of Oppression, but the mistake of Charity. Occupied with the struggles of a splendid ambition, our rulers have legislated for the poor in the genius, not of a desire to oppress, but of an impatience to examine. At length there has dawned forth from the dark apathy of Ages a light, which has revealed to the two ranks of our social world the elements and the nature of their several conditions. That light has the properties

of a more fiery material. Prudence may make it the most useful of our servants; neglect may suffer it to become the most ruthless of our destroyers. It is difficult, however, to arouse the great to a full conception of the times in which we live: the higher classes are the last to hear the note of danger. The same principle pervades the inequalities of Social Life, as that so remarkable in the laws of Physical Science: they who stand on the lofty eminence,—the high places of the world,—are deafened by the atmosphere itself, and can scarcely hear the sound of the explosion which alarms the quiet of the plains!

In the interval of a year that has elapsed since the first appearance of this work and the present edition, the last recommendations of the Poor Law Commissioners have urged the necessity of a system of reform exactly similar to that I have chalked out in this chapter,—the Ministers have proceeded upon those recommendations—and thus the very plan I have advocated is about to be carried into effect. Happy for the Government, were it in all matters equally bold—equally diligent in its previous investigation of evils—equally decided in its measures of reform! I leave untouched what I have written on the abuses of the Poor Laws—although, if the appointments to the new Board be wisely filled up, those abuses will soon cease to exist. I am anxious that our children should know the state of England at the

present time; and for that reason I omit nothing which can give accuracy and completeness to the picture—in ten years the canvas will be devoted to new colours and fresh designs.

END OF BOOK II.

BOOK THE THIRD.

SURVEY OF THE STATE OF EDUCATION, ARISTOCRATIC AND POPULAR, AND OF THE GENERAL INFLUENCES OF MORALITY AND RELIGION IN ENGLAND.

INSCRIBED TO

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"Men generally need knowledge to overpower their passions and master their prejudice; and therefore to see your brother in ignorance is to see him unfurnished to all good works: and every master is to cause his family to be instructed; every governor is to instruct his charge, every man his brother, by all possible and just provisions. For if the people die for want of knowledge, they who are set over them shall also die for want of charity."

BISHOP JEREMY TAYLOR.

"O curvæ in terras animæ et celestium inanes?"— PERSIUS.

CHAPTER I.

THE EDUCATION OF THE HIGHER CLASSES.

Religion and Education, subjects legitimately combined—Quintilian's Remark against learning too hastily—*We* learn too slowly—Reason why Parents submit to a deficient Education for their Children—Supposition that Connexions are acquired at Schools considered and confuted—Supposition that Distinctions at a Public School are of permanent Advantage to the after Man—Its fallacy—Abolition of Close Boroughs likely to affect the Number sent to Public Schools—What is taught at a Public School?—the Classics only, and the Classics badly—The abuses of Endowments thus shown—The Principle of Endowments defended—In vain would we *defend* them unless their Guardians will *reform*—The Higher Classes necessitated, for Self-preservation, to establish a sounder System of Education for *themselves*.

SIR,

No man, in these days of trite materialism, and the discordant jealousies of rival sects, has been more deeply imbued than yourself with the desire of extending knowledge, and the spirit of a large and generous Christianity. It is to you that I most respectfully, and with all the reverence of political gratitude, dedicate this Survey of the present state of our Education, coupled with that of our Religion. In Prussia, that country in

which, throughout the whole world, education is the most admirably administered, the authority over the Public Worship of the State is united with that over the Public Instruction. The minister of the one is minister also of the other. In the Duchy of Saxe Weimar, which has seemed as the focus of a brilliant philosophy to the eyes of abashed Europe, in which liberty of thought and piety of conduct have gone hand in hand, the whole administration of the instruction of the people may be said to be intrusted to the clergy,* and the light which has beamed over men has been kindled at the altars of their God. A noble example for our own clergy, and which may be considered a proof, that as virtue is the sole end both of true religion and of true knowledge—so, to unite the means, is only to facilitate the object.

I shall consider then in one and the same section of my work, as subjects legitimately conjoined, the state of Education in England, and the state of Religion.

And, first, I shall treat of the general education given to the higher classes. In this, sir, I must beseech your indulgence while I wrestle with the social prejudices which constitute our chief obstacle in obtaining, for the youth of the wealthier

* A member of the Laity has, indeed, been added to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners of Saxe Weimar; but he unites entirely with them in the ecclesiastical spirit. That ecclesiastical spirit in Saxe Weimar is benevolence.

orders, a more practical and a nobler system of education than exists at present. If my argument at first seems to militate against those venerable Endowments which you so eloquently have defended, you will discover, I think, before I have completed it, that I am exactly friendly to their principle, *because* I am hostile to their abuses. Be it their task to reform themselves, it is for us to point out the necessity of that reform.

"Pour water hastily into a vessel of a narrow neck, little enters; pour it gradually, and by small quantities—and the vessel is filled!" Such is the simile employed by Quintilian to show the folly of teaching children too much at a time. But Quintilian did not mean that we should pour the water into the vase drop by drop, and cease suddenly and for ever the moment the liquid begins to conceal the surface of the bottom. Such, however, is the mode in which we affect to fill the human vessel at the present day. It can be only that people have never seriously reflected on the present academical association for the prevention of knowledge, that the association still exists. The unprejudiced reasoning of a moment is sufficient to prove the monstrous absurdities incorporated in the orthodox education of a gentleman.

Let us suppose an honest tradesman about to bind his son apprentice to some calling—that, for instance, of a jeweller, or a glovemaker. Would

not two questions be instantly suggested by common sense to his mind?—1st. Will it be useful for my son to know only jewellery or glove-making? 2nd. And if so, will he learn *how* to set jewels, or make gloves, by being bound an apprentice to Neighbour So-and-so, since it is likely that if Neighbour So-and-so does not teach him that, he will teach him nothing else?

Why do not these plain questions force themselves into the mind of a gentleman sending his son to Eton? Why does he not ask himself—1st. Will it be useful for my son to know only Latin and Greek? and secondly, If it be, will he *learn* Latin and Greek by being sent to Dr. K——, for it is not likely that Dr. K—— will teach him any thing else?

If every gentleman asked himself those two questions previous to sending his sons to Eton, one might suspect that the head-mastership would soon be a sinecure. But before I come to examine the answers to be returned to these questions, let us dispose of some subtle and unacknowledged reasons in favour of the public school, which actuate the parent in consenting to sacrifice the intellectual improvement of his son. Writers in favour of an academical reform have not sufficiently touched upon the points I am about to refer to, for they have taken it for granted that men would allow education alone was to be the end of scholastic discipline; but a great propor-

tion of those who send their children to school secretly meditate other advantages besides those of intellectual improvement.

In the first place the larger portion of the boys at a public school are the sons of what may be termed the minor aristocracy—of country gentlemen—of rich merchants—of opulent lawyers—of men belonging to the "untitled property" of the country: the smaller portion are the sons of statesmen and of nobles. Now each parent of the former class thinks in his heart of the advantages of acquaintance and connexion that his son will obtain, by mixing with the children of the latter class. He looks beyond the benefits of education—to the chances of getting on in the world. "Young Howard's father has ten livings—young Johnson may become intimate with young Howard, and obtain one of the ten livings." So thinks old Johnson when he pays for the Greek which his son will never know. "Young Cavendish is the son of a minister—if young Smith distinguishes himself what a connexion he may form!" So says old Smith when he finds his son making excellent Latin verses, although incapable of translating Lucan without a dictionary! Less confined, but equally aristocratic, are the views of the mother.—"My son is very intimate with little Lord John: he will get, when of age, into the best society!—who knows but that one of these days he may marry little Lady Mary?"

It is with these notions that shrewd and worldly parents combat their conviction that their sons are better cricketers than scholars; and so long as such advantages allure them, it is in vain that we reason and philosophize on education—we are proving only what with them is the minor part of the question, nay, which they may be willing to allow. *We* speak of educating the boy, *they* think already of advancing the man: *we* speak of the necessity of knowledge, but the Smiths and the Johnsons think of the necessity of connexions.

Now here I pause for one moment, that the reader may mark a fresh proof of the universal influence which our aristocracy obtain over every institution—every grade of our social life—from the cradle to the grave. Thus insensibly they act on the wheels of that mighty machine—the education of our youth—by which the knowledge, the morals, and the welfare of a state are wrought; and it becomes of less consequence to be wise, than to form a connexion with the great.

But calmly considered, we shall find that even this advantage of connexion is not obtained by the education of a public school. And knowing that this prevailing notion must be answered, before the generality of parents will dispassionately take a larger view of this important subject, I shall proceed to its brief examination.

Boys at a public school are on an equality. Let us suppose any boy, plebeian or patrician,—those

of his contemporaries whose pursuits are most congenial to his become naturally his closest friends. Boarders, perhaps, at the same house, custom and accident bring such as wish to be intimate constantly together, and a similarity of habits produces a stronger alliance than even a similarity of dispositions.

Howard, the peer's eldest, and Johnson, the commoner's younger son, leave school at the same age—they are intimate friends—we will suppose them even going up to the same University. But Howard is entered as a nobleman at Trinity, and Johnson goes a pensioner to Emanuel: their sets of acquaintance become instantly and widely different. Howard may now and then take milk punch with Johnson, and Johnson may now and then "wine" with Howard, but they have no circle in common—they are not commonly brought together. Custom no longer favours their intercourse—a similarity of pursuits no longer persuades them that they have a similarity of dispositions. For the first time, too, the difference of rank becomes markedly visible. At no place are the demarcations of birth and fortune so faintly traced as at a School—nowhere are they so broad and deep as at an University. The young noble is suddenly removed from the side of the young commoner: when he walks he is indued in a distinguishing costume: when he dines he is placed at a higher table along with the heads of his college:

at chapel he addresses his Maker, or reads the Racing Calendar, in a privileged pew. At *most* colleges* the discipline to which *he* is subjected is, comparatively speaking, relaxed and lenient. Punctuality in lectures and prayers is of no vital importance to a "young man of such expectations." As regards the first, hereditary legislators have no necessity for instruction; and as to the last, the religion of a college has no damnation for a lord. Nay, at Cambridge, to such an extent are the demarcations of ranks observed, that the eldest son of one baronet assumes a peculiarity in costume to distinguish him from the younger son of another, and is probably a greater man at college than he ever is during the rest of his life. Nor does this superstitious observance of the social grades bound itself to titular rank: it is at college that an eldest son suddenly leaps into that consequence—that elevation above his brothers—which he afterwards retains through life. It usually happens that the eldest son of a gentleman of some five thousands a year, goes up as *a Fellow*† *Commoner*, and his brothers as *Pensioners*. A marked distinction in dress, dinners, luxuries, and, in some colleges, discipline, shows betimes the value attached to wealth —and wealth only; and the younger son learns,

* Chiefly, however, at the smaller colleges, and less at Oxford than at Cambridge.

† *Fellow* Commoners at Cambridge; *Gentlemen* Commoners at Oxford.

to the full extent of the lesson, that he is *worth* so many thousands less than his elder brother. It is obvious that these distinctions, so sudden and so marked, must occasion an embarrassment and coldness, in the continuance at college, of friendships, formed at school. The young are commonly both shy and proud—our pensioner Johnson, chilled and struck by the new position of our nobleman Howard, is a little diffident in pressing his acquaintance on him; and our nobleman Howard, though not desirous, we will suppose, to cut his old friend—yet amidst new occupations and new faces—amidst all the schemes and amusements of the incipient man, and the self-engrossed complacency of the budding lord for the first time awakened to his station, naturally and excusably reconciles himself to the chances that so seldom bring him in contact with his early ally, and by insensible but not slow degrees he passes from the first stage of missing his friendship to the last of forgetting it. This is the common history of scholastic "connexions" where there is a disparity in station. It is the vulgar subject of wonder at the University, that "fellows the best friends in the world at Eton are never brought together at college." And thus vanish into smoke all the hopes of the parental Johnsons!—all "the advantages of early friendship!"—all the dreams for which the shrewd father consented to sacrifice, for "little Latin and *no* Greek," the precious—the irrevocable season—of

"the sowing of good seed," of pliant memories and ductile dispositions—the lost, the golden opportunity, of instilling into his son the elements of real wisdom and true morality—the knowledge that adorns life, and the principles that should guide it!

But suppose this friendship *does* pass the ordeal; suppose that Howard and Johnson do preserve the desired connexion; suppose that together they have broken lamps and passed the 'little go,' together they have "crammed" Euclid and visited Barnwell; suppose that their pursuits still remain congenial, and they enter the great world "*mutuis animis amanter*"—how little likely is it that the 'connexion' will continue through the different scenes in which the lot of each will probably be cast. Ball-rooms and hells, Newmarket and Crockford's, are the natural element of the one, but scarcely so of the other. We will not suppose our young noble plunging into excesses, but merely mingling in the habitual pleasures belonging to his station; we imagine him not depraved, but dissipated; not wicked, but extravagant; not mad, but thoughtless. Now mark—Does he continue his connexion with Johnson or not? the answer is plain—If Johnson's pursuits remain congenial—yes! if otherwise—not! How can he be intimate with one whom he never meets? How can he associate with one whom society does not throw in his way? If then Johnson continue to share his friendship, he must continue to share his

occupations; the same ball-rooms and the same hells must bring them into contact, and the common love of pleasure cement their sympathy for each other. But is this exactly what the prudent father contemplated in the advantages of connexion; was it to be a connexion in profusion and in vice? Was it to impair the fortunes of his son, and not to improve them? This question points to no exaggerated or uncommon picture. Look round the gay world and say if loss, and not gain, be not the ordinary result of such friendships between the peer's elder son and the gentleman's younger one as survive the trials of school and college. The latter was to profit by the former—but the temptations of society thwart the scheme; the poor man follows the example of the rich; dresses—hunts—intrigues—games—runs in debt, and is beggared through the very connexion which the father desired, and by the very circles of society which the mother sighed that he should enter. I do not deny that there are some young adventurers more wary and more prudent, who contrive to get from their early friend, the schemed-for living or the dreamt-of place; but these instances are singularly rare, and to speculate upon such a hazard, as a probable good, is incalculably more mad than to have bought your son a ticket in the lottery by way of providing for his fortune.

The idea then of acquiring at public schools a profitable connexion, or an advantageous friend-

ship, is utterly vain. 1st, Because few school connexions continue through college; 2nd, Because, if so continued, few college connexions continue through the world; 3rd, Because, even if they do, experience proves that a friendship between the richer man and the poorer, is more likely to ruin the last by the perpetual example of extravagance, than to enrich him by the uncommon accident of generosity. Add to these all the usual casualties of worldly life, the chances of a quarrel and a rupture, the chances that the expected living must be sold to pay a debt, the promised office transferred to keep a vote, the delays, the humiliations, the mischances, the uncertainties; and ask yourself if, whatever be the advantages of public education, a connexion with the great is not the very last to be counted upon?

"But, perhaps, my boy may distinguish himself," says the ambitious father; "he is very clever. Distinction at Eton lasts through life; he may get into parliament; he may be a great man; why not a second Canning?"

Alas!—granted that your son be clever, and granted that he distinguish himself, how few of those who are remarkable at Eton are ever heard of in the world; their reputation "dies and makes no sign." And this, for two reasons: first, because the distinctions of a public school are no evidence of real talent; learning by heart and the composition of Latin or Greek verse are the usual

proofs to which the boy's intellect is put; the one is a mere exertion of memory—the other, a mere felicity of imitation;—and I doubt if the school-boy's comprehensive expression of "knack" be not the just phrase to be applied to the faculty both of repeating other men's words, and stringing imitations of other men's verses. Knack! an ingenious faculty indeed, but no indisputable test of genius, and affording no undeniable promise of a brilliant career! But success, in these studies, is not only no sign of future superiority of mind; the studies themselves scarcely tend to adapt the mind to those solid pursuits by which distinction is ordinarily won. Look at the arenas for the author or the senator; the spheres for active or for literary distinction; is there any thing in the half idle, and desultory, and superficial course of education pursued at public schools, which tends to secure future eminence in either? It is a great benefit if boys learn something solid, but it is a far greater benefit if they contract the desire and the habit of acquiring solid information. But how few ever leave school with the intention and the energies to continue intellectual studies. We are not to be told of the few great men who have been distinguished as senators, or as authors, and who have been educated at public schools. The intention of general education is to form the many, and not the few; if the many are ignorant, it is in vain you assert that the few are wise:—we have,

even supposing their wisdom originated in your system, a right to consider them exceptions, and not as examples. But how much vainer is it to recite the names of these honoured few, when it is far more than doubtful even whether they owed any thing to your scholastic instruction; when it is more than doubtful whether their talents did not rise in *spite* of your education, and *not because* of it; whether their manhood was illustrious, not because their genius was formed by the studies of youth, but because it could not be crushed by them. All professions and all ranks have their Shakspeare and their Burns, men who are superior to the adverse influences by which inferior intellects are chilled into inaction. And this supposition is rendered far more probable when we find how few of *these* few were noted *at school* for any portion of the mental power they afterwards developed; or, in other words, when we observe how much *the academical process stifled and repressed their genius*, so that if their future life had been (as more or less ought to be the aim of scholars) a continuation of the same pursuits and objects as those which were presented to their youth, they would actually have lived without developing their genius, and died without obtaining a name. But Chance is more merciful than men's systems, and the eternal task of Nature is that of counteracting our efforts to deteriorate ourselves.

But you think that your son shall be distinguished at Eton, and that the distinction shall continue through life; we see, then, that the chances are against him—they are rendered every day more difficult—because, formerly the higher classes only were educated. Bad as the public schools might be, nothing better perhaps existed; superficial knowledge was pardoned, because it was more useful than no knowledge.

But now the people are wakened; education, not yet general, is at least extended; a desire for the Solid and the Useful circulates throughout mankind. Grant that your son obtains all the academical honours; grant, even, that he enters parliament through the distinction he has obtained,—have those honours taught him the principles of jurisprudence, the business of legislation, the details of finance, the magnificent mysteries of commerce;—perhaps, even, they have not taught him the mere and vulgar art of public speaking! How few of the young men thus brought forward ever rise into fame!

A mediocre man, trained to the habits of discerning what is true knowledge, and the application to pursue it, will rise in any public capacity to far higher celebrity than the genius of a public school, who has learnt nothing which it is necessary to the public utility to know. As, then, the hope of acquiring connexions was a chimera, so that of obtaining permanent distinction for your

son, in the usual process of public education, is a dream. What millions of 'promising men,' unknown, undone, have counterbalanced the success of a single Canning!

I may here observe, that the abolition of close boroughs is likely to produce a very powerful effect upon the numbers sent to a public school. As speculation is the darling passion of mankind, many, doubtless, were the embryo adventurers sent to Eton, in the hope that Eton honours would unlock the gates of a Gatton or Old Sarum. Thus, in one of Miss Edgeworth's tales, the clever Westminster boy without fortune receives, even at school, the intimation of a future political career as an encouragement to his ambition, and the Rotten Borough closes the vista of Academical Rewards. This hope is over; men who would cheer on their narrow fortunes by the hope of parliamentary advancement, must now appeal to the people, who have little sympathy with the successful imitator of Alcæan measures, or the honoured adept in 'longs and shorts.' And consequently, to those parents who choose the public school as a possible opening to public life, one great inducement is no more, and a new course of study will appear necessary to obtain the new goals of political advancement.

I have thus sought to remove the current impression that public schools are desirable, as affording opportunities for advantageous connexion

and permanent distinction. And the ambitious father (what father is not ambitious for his son?) may therefore look dispassionately at the true ends of education, and ask himself if, at a public school, those ends are accomplished? This part of the question has been so frequently and fully examined, and the faults of our academical system are so generally allowed, that a very few words will suffice to dispose of it. The only branches of learning really attempted to be taught at our public schools are the dead languages.* Assuredly there are other items in the bills—French and arithmetic, geography and the use of the globes. But these, it is well known, are merely nominal instructions: the utmost acquired in geography is the art of colouring a few maps: and geography itself is only a noble and a practical science when associated with the history, the commerce, and the productions of the country, or the cities, whose mere position it indicates. What matters it that a boy can tell us that Povoa is on one side the river Douro, and Pivasende on the other; that the dusky inhabitant of Benguela looks over the South Atlantic, or that the waters

* Formerly a nobleman, or rich gentleman, in sending his son to school, sent with him a private tutor, whose individual tuition was intended to supply the deficiencies of the public course of study. This custom has almost expired, and aristocratic education, therefore, instead of improving, is still more superficial than it was.

of Terek exhaust themselves in the Caspian sea? Useful, indeed, is this knowledge, combined with other branches of statistics;—useless by itself,—another specimen of the waste of memory and the frivolity of imitation. But even this how few learn, and how few of the learners remember!

Arithmetic with its pretended acquisitions, is, of all scholastic delusions, the most remarkable. What sixth-form ornament of Harrow or Eton has any knowledge of figures? Of all parts of education, this the most useful is, at aristocratic schools, the most neglected. As to French, at the end of eight years the pupil leaves Eton, and does not know so much as his sister has acquired from her governess in three months. Latin and Greek, then, alone remain as the branches of human wisdom to which serious attention has been paid.

I am not one of those who attach but trifling importance to the study of the Classics; myself a devoted, though a humble student, I have not so long carried the thyrsus but that I must believe in the God. And he would indeed be the sorriest of pedants who should affect to despise the knowledge of those great works, which, at their first appearance, enlightened one age, and in their after restoration, broke the darkness of another! Surely one part of the long season of youth can scarcely be more profitably employed than in examining the claims of those who have exercised so

vast and durable an influence over the human mind.

But it is obvious that even thoroughly to master the Greek and Latin tongues, would be but to comprehend a very small part of a practical education. Formerly it was obviously wise to pay more *exclusive* attention to their acquisition than at present, for formerly they contained *all* the literary treasures of the world, and now they contain only a part. The literature of France, Germany, England, is at least as necessary for a man born in the nineteenth century, as that of Rome and Athens.

But, it is said, the season of childhood is more requisite for mastering a skill in the dead languages than it is for the living. Even if this assertion were true, there would be no reason why the dead languages *alone* should be learnt; if the early youth of the mind be *necessary* for the acquisition of the one, it is at least a desirable period for the acquisition of the other. But the fact is, that the season of youth is at least as essential for the learning the living languages as it is for acquiring the dead; because it is necessary to speak the one and it is not necessary to speak the other: and the facile and pliant organs of childhood are indeed almost requisite for the mastery of the tones and accents in a spoken language, although the more mature understanding of future years is

equally able to grasp the roots and construction of a written one.

As the sole business of life is not literature; so education ought not to be only literary. Yet what can you, the father of the boy you are about to send to a public school—what, I ask, can you think of a system which, devoting the whole period of youth to literature, not only excludes from consideration the knowledge of all continental languages—the languages of Montesquieu and Schiller, but also totally neglects any knowledge of the authors of your own country, and even the element of that native tongue in which all the business of life must be carried on? Not in Latin, nor in Greek, but in his English tongue your son must write; in that tongue, if you desire him to become great, he is to be an orator, an historian, a poet, or a philosopher. And this language is above all others the most utterly neglected, its authors never studied, even its grammar never taught. To know Latin and Greek is a great intellectual luxury, but to know one's own language is almost an intellectual necessity.

But literature alone does not suffice for education; the aim of that grave and noble process is large and catholic: it would not be enough to make a man learned; a pedant is proverbially a useless fool. The aim of education is to make a man wise and good. Ask yourself what there is

in modern education that will fulfil this end? Not a single doctrine of moral science is taught—not a single moral principle inculcated.* Even in the dead languages it is the poets and the more poetical of the historians the pupil mostly learns, rarely the philosopher and the moralist. It was, justly, I think, objected to the London University,

* The only moral principle at a public school is that which the boys themselves tacitly inculcate and acknowledge; it is impossible to turn a large number of human beings loose upon each other, but that one of the first consequences will be the formation of a public opinion, public opinion instantly creates a silent but omnipotent code of laws. Thus, among boys there is always a dim and capricious sense of honour and of justice, which *is the only morality* that belongs to schools. It is this vague and conventional sense to which the master trusts, and with which he seldom interferes. But *how* vague it is, how confused, how erring! What cruelty, tyranny, duplicity, are compatible with it! It is no disgrace to insult the weak and to lie to the strong, to torment the fag and to deceive the master. These principles grow up with the boy, insensibly they form the matured man. Look abroad in the world, what is the most common character?—that which is at once arrogant and servile. It is this early initiation into the vices of men which with some parents is an inducement to send their son to a public school. How often you hear the careful father say, "Tom goes to Eton to *learn the world*." One word on this argument: Your boy does *not* accomplish your object; he learns the *vices of the world*, it is true, but not the caution which should accompany them. Who so extravagant or so thoughtless as the young man escaped from a public school;—who so easily duped,—who so fair a prey to the trading sharper and the sharping tradesman—who runs up such bills with tailors and horse-dealers—who so notoriously the greenhorn and the bubble? Is this his boasted knowledge of the world? You may have made your boy vicious, but you will find that that is *not* making him wise.

that religion was not to be taught in its schools; but is religion taught at any of our public institutions—previous, at least, to a course of Paley at the University? Attendance at church or chapel is not religion! the life, the guidance, the strength of religion, where are these? Look round every corner of the fabric of education, still Latin and Greek and Greek and Latin are all that you can descry,

"Mixtaque ridenti fundet colocasia acantho."

But the father hesitates. I see, sir, you yet think Greek and Latin are excellent things, are worth the sacrifice of all else. Well, then, on this ground let us meet you. Your boy will go to Eton to learn Greek and Latin; he will stay there eight years (having previously spent four at a preparatory school), he will come away at the end of his probation, but what Latin or Greek will he bring with him? Are you a scholar yourself? examine then the average of young men of eighteen; open a page of some author they have *not* read, have not parrot-like got by heart; open a page in the dialogues of Lucian, in the Thebaid of Statius. Ask the youth, you have selected from the herd, to construe it as you would ask your daughter to construe a page of some French author she has never seen before, a poem of Regnier, or an exposition in the *Esprit des Lois*. Does he not pause, does he not blush, does he not hesitate, does not his eye wander abroad in search

of the accustomed "Crib," does he not falter out something about lexicons and grammars, and at last throw down the book and tell you he has never learnt *that*, but as for Virgil or Herodotus, *there* he is your man? At the end then of eight years, without counting the previous four, your son has not learnt Greek and Latin, and he has learnt nothing else to atone for it. Here then we come to the result of our two inquiries.—1st. Is it necessary to learn something else besides Latin and Greek?—It is! But even if not necessary, are Greek and Latin well taught at a public school?—They are not. With these conclusions I end this part of my inquiry.

Mr. Bentham in his *Chrestomathia* has drawn up a programme of what he considered might be fairly taught and easily acquired in the process of a complete education. There is something formidable in this list of studies, it is so vast and various, that it seems almost visionary; the leap from the 'learn nothing,' to 'the learn all' is too wide and startling. But without going to an extent which would leave no branch of human knowledge excluded, it is perfectly clear that the education of our youth may be conveniently widened to a circle immeasurably more comprehensive than any which has yet been drawn.

It is probable that the System of Hamilton may be wrong; probable that there is a certain quackery in the System of Pestalozzi; possible

that the Lancasterian System may be overrated; but let any dispassionate man compare the progress of a pupil under an able tutor in any one of these systems with the advances made at an ordinary public school.* What I complain of, and what you, sir, to whom I address these pages, must complain of also, is this: that at these schools—in which our hereditary legislators are brought up—in which those who are born to frame and remodel the mighty Mechanism of Law, and

* The Monitorial System was applied with eminent success by Mr. Pillans, at the High School, Edinburgh, to the teaching of Latin, Greek, and Ancient Geography. He applied it for several years to a class of boys not less in number than 230 (ages varying from 12 to 16), without any assistance in the teaching of the above branches of learning, save what he derived from the boys themselves. Of this most important experiment of applying to the higher branches of learning a principle hitherto limited to the lower, Mr. Pillans speaks thus, in an able letter, with which he was kind enough to honour me: "When I compare the effect of the Monitorial system with my own experience of that class, both when I was a pupil of it myself, under Dr. Adam, and during the first two years after I succeeded him, I have no hesitation in saying, that it multiplied incalculably the means and resources of the teacher, both as regarded the progress of the pupils in good learning, and the forming of their minds, manners, and moral habits." Not long after he became Professor of Humanity, Mr. Pillans adopted the Monitorial System, first in his junior, next in his senior class. He thus speaks of its success: "I believe this is the only instance of the Monitorial principle being acted on within the walls of a college. In the limited application I make of it there, it has succeeded even beyond the expectations I had formed. Of this I may be tempted to say more hereafter."

wield the Moral Powers of Custom, receive the ineffaceable impressions of youth — at these schools, I say, Religion is not taught—Morals are not taught—Philosophy is not taught—the light of the purer and less material Sciences never breaks upon the gaze. The intellect of the men so formed is to guide our world, and that intellect is uncultured!

In various parts of the Continent there are admirable schools for teachers, on the principle that those who teach, should themselves be taught. Still more important is it in an aristocratic constitution, that those who are to *govern* us, should be at least enlightened. Are you who now read these pages, a parent? Come—note the following sentence. Ages have rolled since it was written, but they have not dimmed the brightness of the maxim: "Intellect is more excellent than science, and a life according to intellect preferable to a life according to science." So said that ancient philosopher, whose spirit approached the nearest to the genius of Christianity. What then is that preparation to life which professes to teach learning and neglects the intellect, which loads the memory, which forgets the soul? Beautifully proceedeth Plato:—"A life according to intellect is alone free from the vulgar errors of our race, it is that mystic port of the soul, that sacred Ithaca, into which Homer conducts Ulysses after the education of life." But far different is the

Port into which the modern education conducts her votaries and the Haven of Prejudice is the only receptacle to the Ship of Fools.*

It is the errors that have thus grafted themselves on the system of our educational endowments, which have led the recent philosophy to attack with no measured violence, the principle of endowments themselves—an attack pregnant with much mischief, and which, if successful, would be nearly fatal to all the loftier and abstruser sciences in England. I desire to see preserved—I desire to see strengthened—I desire to see beloved and regenerated the principle of literary endowments, though I quarrel with the abuses of endowments that at present exist. You yourself, sir, have placed the necessity of endowments in a right and unanswerable point of view. Mankind must be invited to knowledge—the public are *not* sufficient patrons of the abstruse sciences—no dogma has been more popular, none more fallacious; there is no appetence in a commercial and

* If I have dwelt only on Public Schools, it is because the private schools are for the most part modelled on the same plan. Home tuition is rare. The private tutor, viz. the gentleman who takes some five or six pupils to prepare for the University, is often the best teacher our youth receive. Whatever they learn thoroughly they learn with him; but unhappily this knowledge stints itself to the classics and the physical sciences required at college;—they prepare the pupil for college and not for wisdom. At many of these academies, however, religious instruction is, perhaps, for the first time in the pupil's life, a little insisted upon.

bustling country to a learning which does not make money—to a philosophy which does not rise to the Woolsack, or sway the Mansion-house. The herd must be courted to knowledge. You found colleges and professorships, and you place Knowledge before their eyes—*then* they are allured to it. You clothe it with dignity, you gift it with rewards—*then* they are unconsciously disposed to venerate it. Public opinion follows what is honoured; honour knowledge, and you chain to it that opinion. Endowments at a University beget emulation in subordinate institutions; if they are nobly filled, they produce in the latter the desire of rivalry; if inadequately, the ambition to excel. They present amidst the shifts and caprices of unsettled learning a constant landmark and a steadfast example. The public will not patronize the higher sciences. Lacroix, as stated, sir, in your work, gave lessons in the higher mathematics,—to *eight* pupils! But the higher sciences *ought* to be cultivated, hence another necessity for endowments. Wherever endowments are the most flourishing, thither learning is the most attracted. Thus, you have rightly observed, and Adam Smith before you, that in whatever country the colleges are more affluent than the church, colleges exhibit the most brilliant examples of learning. Wherever, on the other hand, the church is more richly endowed than the college, the pulpit absorbs the learning of the

chair. Hence in England, the learning of the clergy; and in Scotland that of the professors.* Let me add to this, the example of Germany, where there is scarce a professor who does not enjoy a well-earned celebrity—the example of France, where, in Voltaire's time, when the church was so wealthy, he could only find one professor of any literary merit (and he but of mediocre claims), and where, in the present time when the church is impoverished, the most remarkable efforts of Christian philosophy have emanated from the chairs of the professional lecturer.†

I have said that the public will not so reward the professor of the higher sciences as to sanction the idea that we may safely leave him to their mercy. Let us suppose, however, that the public are more covetous of lofty knowledge than we imagine. Let us suppose that the professor of philosophy *can* obtain sufficient pupils to maintain him, but that by *pupils alone* he is maintained, what would be the probable result? Why, that he would naturally seek to enlarge the circle of his pupils—that in order to enlarge it, he would stoop

* "Half the distinguished authorship of Scotland has been professional."—*Chalmers on Endowments.*

† If in the meditated reform of the church the average revenues of the clergy be more equalized, the Professorships would gain something in learning, while the Church would still be so affluent as to lose nothing. The chair and the pulpit should be tolerably equalized in endowments in order to prevent the one subtracting from the intellectual acquirements of the other.

from the starred and abstruse sphere of his research —that he would dwell on the more familiar and less toilsome elements of science—that he would fear to lose his pupils by soaring beyond the average capacity—that he would be, in one word, a teacher of rudiments of science, not an investigator of its difficult results. Thus we should have, wherever we turned, nothing but elementary knowledge and facts made easy—thus we should contract the eagle wing of philosophy to a circle of male Mrs. Marcets—ever dwelling on the threshold of Knowledge and trembling to penetrate the temple.

Endowments raise (as the philosopher *should* be raised) the lofty and investigating scholar above the necessity of humbling his intellect in order to earn his bread—they give him up to the serene meditation from which he distils the essence of the diviner—nay, even the more useful but hitherto undiscovered—wisdom. If from their shade has emanated the vast philosophy of Kant, which dwarfs into littleness the confined materialism of preceding schools, so also from amidst the shelter they afford broke forth the first great regenerator of practical politics; and the origin of the *Wealth of Nations* was founded in the industrious tranquillity of a professorship at Glasgow.*

Let us then eschew all that false and mercantile

* Dr. Chalmers eloquently complains, that they made Dr. Smith a commissioner of customs, and thereby lost to the public his projected work on Jurisprudence.

liberalism of the day which would destroy the high seats and shelters of Learning, and would leave what is above the public comprehension to the chances of the public sympathy. It is possible that endowments favour many drones—granted—but if they produce one great philosopher, whose mind would otherwise have been bowed to lower spheres, that advantage counterbalances a thousand drones. How many sluggards will counterpoise an Adam Smith! "If you form but a handful of wise men," said the great Julian, "you do more for the world than many kings can do." And if it be true that he who has planted a blade of corn in the spot which was barren before is a benefactor to his species; what shall we not pardon to a system by which a nobler labourer is enabled to plant in the human mind an idea which was unknown to it till then?

But if ever endowments for the cultivators of the higher letters were required, it is now. As education is popularized, its tone grows more familiar, but its research less deep—the demand for the elements of knowledge vulgarizes scholarship to the necessity of the times—there is an impatience of that austere and vigorous toil by which alone men can extend the knowledge already in the world. As you diffuse the stream, guard well the fountains. But it is in vain for us—it is in vain, sir, even for you, how influential soever your virtues and your genius, to exert yourself in behalf

of our Educational Endowments, if they themselves very long continue unadapted to the growing knowledge of the world. Even the superior classes are awakened to a sense of the insufficiency of fashionable education—of the vast expense and the little profit of the system pursued at existing schools and universities.

One great advantage of diffusing knowledge among the lower classes is the necessity thus imposed on the higher of increasing knowledge among themselves. I suspect that the new modes and systems of education which succeed the most among the people will ultimately be adopted by the gentry. Seeing around them the mighty cities of a new Education—the education of the nineteenth century—they will no longer be contented to give their children the education of three hundred years ago. One of two consequences will happen: either public schools will embrace improved modes and additional branches of learning, or it will cease to be the fashion to support them. The more aristocratic families who have no interest in their foundations will desert them, and they will gradually be left as monastic reservoirs to college institutions.*

* For one source of advantage in the public schools will remain unchoked—they will continue to be the foundation on which certain University Emoluments are built. College scholarships, college fellowships, and college livings, will still present to the poorer gentry and clergy an honourable inducement to send their sons to the public schools; and these will, therefore,

Let us hope to avert this misfortune while we may, and, by exciting among the teachers of education a wholesome and legitimate spirit of alarm, arouse in them the consequent spirit of reform. Let us interest the higher classes in the preservation of their own power: let them while encouraging schools for the children of the poor, improve, by their natural influence, the schools adapted for their own; the same influence that now supports a superficial education, would as easily expedite the progress of a sound one, and it would become the fashion to be educated well, as it is now the fashion to be educated ill. Will they refuse or dally with this necessity?—they cannot know its importance to themselves. If the aristocracy would remain the most powerful class, they must continue to be the most intelligent. The art of printing was explained to a savage king, the Napoleon of his tribes. "A magnificent conception," said he, after a pause, "but it can never be introduced into my domains; it would make knowledge equal, and

still remain a desirable mode of *disposing* of children, despite of their incapacities to *improve* them. If we could reform the conditions on which University Endowments are bestowed on individuals, a proportionate reform in the scholars ambitious to obtain them, would be a necessary consequence. This may be difficult to do with the old endowments, and the readiest mode would be to found new endowments on a better principle and under better patronage, as a counterpoise to the abuses of the old. Thus, not by destroying old endowments, but by creating new, shall we best serve the purpose of the loftier knowledge.

I should fall. How can I govern my subjects, except by being wiser than they?"—Profound reflection, which contains the germ of all legislative control! When knowledge was confined to the cloister, the monks were the most powerful part of the community, gradually it extended to the nobles, and gradually the nobles supplanted the priests: the shadow of the orb has advanced—it is resting over the people—it is for you, who, for centuries, have drunk vigour from the beams—it is for you to say if the light shall merely extend to a more distant circle, or if it shall darken from your own. It is only by diverting the bed of the Mighty River, that your city can be taken, and your kingdom can pass away!

CHAPTER II.

STATE OF EDUCATION AMONG THE MIDDLING CLASSES.

Religion more taught in Schools for the Middle Orders than those for the Higher—But Moral Science equally neglected—King's College and the London University.

A VERY few words will dismiss this part of my subject. The middle classes, by which I mean chiefly shopkeepers and others engaged in trade, naturally enjoy a more average and even education, than either those above or below them;—it continues a shorter time than the education of the aristocracy—it embraces fewer objects—its discipline is usually more strict: it includes Latin, but not too much of it; and arithmetic and caligraphy, merely nominal with the aristocratic teachers, are the main matters considered, where the pupils are intended for trade. English themes usually make a part of their education, instead of Latin Sapphics; but as critical lectures do not enlighten and elevate the lesson, the utmost acquired is

a style tolerably grammatic. Religion is more attended to: and explanations of the Bible are sometimes a weekly lesson. Different schools give, of course, more or less into religious knowledge; but, generally speaking, all schools intended to form the trader, pay more attention to religion than those that rear the gentleman. Religion may not be minutely explained, but it is much that its spirit is attended to; and the pupil carries a reverence for it in the abstract, throughout life, even though, in the hurry of commercial pursuits, he may neglect its principles. Hence the middle classes, with us, have a greater veneration than others for religion; hence their disposition, often erroneous, to charity, in their situation of overseers and parochial officers; hence the desire (weak in the other classes) with them so strong, of keeping holy the Sabbath-day; hence their enthusiasm for diffusing religious knowledge among the negroes; hence their easy proselytism to the stricter creeds of Dissenting Sects.

But if the spirit of religion is more maintained in their education, *the science* of morals, in its larger or abstruser principles, is equally neglected. Moral works, by which I mean the philosophy of morals, make no part of their general instruction: they are not taught, like the youth of Germany, to think—to reflect—so that goodness may sink, as it were, into their minds and pervade their actions,

as well as command their vague respect. Hence, they are often narrow and insulated in their moral views, and fall easily, in after life, into their great characteristic error, of considering Appearances as the substance of Virtues.

*** The great experiment of the day for the promotion of Education among the middle classes, has been the foundation of the London University and King's College. The first is intended for all religions, and therefore all religion is banished from it!—a main cause of the difficulties with which it has had to contend, and of the jealousy with which it has been regarded. Its real capital was 158,882*l.* 10s., but this vast sum has not sufficed to set the University clear from the most grievous embarrassments. In its February report of this year, (1833,) it gives a view of its financial state, by which it calculates, that in October next there will be a total balance against it of 3715*l.* The Council are charmed with every thing in the progress of the University—except the finances; they call on the proprietors to advance a further sum, or else they drily declare, they may be "under the necessity of giving notice, that the Institution cannot be reopened upon its present footing." And what is the sum they require?—what sum will preserve the University?—what sum will establish this Great Fountain of Intelligence, in the heart of the richest and vastest Metropolis in the world, and for the benefit of the most respectable bodies of dissent in the Christian community? One additional thousand a year!—It is for this paltry pittance that the Council are disquieted, and proprietors are appealed to.—See now the want of a paternal and providing State! In any other country, the Government would at once supply the deficiency. King's College, with a more lordly and extensive patronage, is equally mournful, when it turns to the pounds and pence part of the prospect; it has a necessity of completing the "River Front;" it calls upon the proprietors for an additional loan of ten per cent., and for their influence to obtain new subscriptions—the sum required is about 8000*l.* As they demand it merely as a loan, and promise

speedy repayment, a State that watched over Education would be no less serviceable to King's College than to the London University.

At both these Universities the Medicine Class is the most numerous. At King's College the proportions are as follows (April 1833).

Regular Students for the prescribed Course of Education . .	109
Occasional ditto in *various* departments of Science and Literature .	196
	305
Medical Department.	
Regular Students for the whole Course of Medical education .	77
Occasional ditto in various branches of Medical Science . . .	233
	310—Total 615

I am informed, too, that of the general Lectures, those upon Chemistry are the most numerously attended.

At the London University, February, 1833, the proportions are in favour of Medical Science.

Faculties of Arts and Law . .	148
————of Medicine . . .	283
	431

The Medical Students have increased in number progressively.

At the London University there is a just complaint of the indifference to that class of sciences, the knowledge of which is not profitable to the possessor in a pecuniary point of view, but which exert a great influence on the "well-being of society," viz. Moral Philosophy—Political Economy and Jurisprudence. "It was in order," say the Council, "to afford opportunities for the study of these sciences, and to confer on this country the facilities given by foreign universities, that this university was mainly founded and supported. The advantage of these studies being rather felt by their gradual operation upon society, than by any specific benefit to the possessor, *the taste for them must be*

created by pointing out the nature of these advantages to the public and to the student: in other words, the study must be produced by teaching them."

This, sir, is in the spirit of your own incontrovertible argument for endowments—viz. that the higher and less worldly studies must be *obtruded* upon men—they will not seek them of themselves. This obtrusion ought not to be left to individuals—it is the proper province of the State.

At King's College there is no professorship of Moral Philosophy, that study is held to be synonymous with Divinity. In my survey of the State of Morality, I think I shall be able to show, that no doctrine can be more mischievous to accurate morals and to uncorrupted religion.

To both these Universities schools are attached, and these I apprehend will prove much more immediately successful than the Colleges.

At the school attached to King's College there are already (April 1833) 319 pupils.

At that belonging to the London University (February 1833) 249.

Viz. at the latter a number about equal to the number of boys at the ancient establishment of Westminster.

At King's College School, the business of each day commences with prayers and the reading of the scriptures; the ordinary educational system of the great public schools is adopted.

At the London University School there is a great, though perhaps a prudent, timidity in trying new educational systems; but there is less *learning by heart* than at other schools, and the wise and common result of all new systems, viz. the plan of a close and frequent questioning, is carefully adopted.

At both Schools (and this is a marked feature in their system) there is strict abstinence from corporal punishment.

In both these Universities the Schools answer better than the Colleges, and have immeasurably outstripped the latter in the numeral progression of students, because the majority of pupils are intended for commercial pursuits, and their education ceases at sixteen; viz. the age at which the instruction of

the College commences. If this should continue, and the progressing School supplant the decaying College, the larger experiment in both Universities will have failed, and the two Colleges be merely additional cheap schools pursuing the old system, and speedily falling into the old vices of tuition.

Be it observed, that the terms at neither of these Universities, (or rather at the schools attached to them, for Universities, nowadays, can scarcely be intended for the poor, viz. the working poor,*) are low enough to admit the humble, and are, therefore, solely calculated to comprehend the children of the middling, orders.

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* The school tuition, at King's College, is for boys, nominated by a proprietor, 15*l.* 15*s.* per annum. To boys not so nominated, 18*l.* 11*s.* per annum. The school tuition for those at the London University is 15*l.* a year.

CHAPTER III.

POPULAR EDUCATION.

Governments require Strength in order to dispense with Violence —State of our popular Education—Report of Lord Brougham's Committee—The Poor defrauded of some Schools—Ousted from others—Ancient popular Education in England—How corrupted—Progress made by Sunday and Lancasterian Schools—Beneficial Zeal of the Clergy—Religion necessary to the Poor—A greater Proportion of our People educated than is supposed; but *how* educated!—Evidence on this subject—The Class-books in the Schools at Saxe Weimar—Comparative Survey of popular Education in Prussia, &c.

I SHALL not enter into any general proofs of the advantage of general education: I shall take that advantage for granted. In my mind, the necessity of instruction was settled by one aphorism centuries ago: "Vice we can learn of ourselves; but virtue and wisdom require a tutor."* If this principle be disputed, the question yet rests upon another: "We are not debating now whether or not the people shall be instructed—that

* Seneca.

has been determined long ago—but whether they shall be *well* or *ill* taught."*

With these two sentences I shall rest this part of my case, anxious to avoid all superfluous exordium and to come at once to the pith and marrow of the subject. †

If ever, sir—a hope which I will not too sanguinely form—if ever the people of this country shall be convinced that a government should be strong, not feeble—that it should be a providing

* Lord Brougham.

† Persons who contend that *individuals* may not be the better for Education, as an argument against *general* Instruction, forget that, like Christianity and civilization, it is upon the wholesale character of large masses, that it is its nature to *act*. Thus Livingstone, the American statesman, informs us, such success has attended the Schools at Boston, "that though they have been in operation more than ten years, and on an average more than 3000 have been educated at them every year, *not one of those* educated there has been ever committed for a crime. In New York, a similar effect has been observed. Of the thousands educated in the public schools of that city, taken generally from the *poorest* classes, but one, it has been asserted, has ever been committed, and that for a trifling offence."—Livingstone's *Introductory Report to the Code of Prison Discipline for Louisiana*. Now, just as a curiosity, read the following account of a certain people many years ago: "At country-weddings, markets, burials, and other the like public occasions, both men and women are to be seen perpetually *drunk*, *cursing*, *blaspheming*, and *fighting* together." What people is it, thus described?—*The Scotch!* The moral, sober, orderly Scotch people—such as they were in the time of Fletcher of Saltoun, whose words these are! Is this a picture of existing Scotland? No! Existing Scotland is educated!

government and not a yielding one—that it should foresee distant emergencies and not remedy sudden evils (sudden! a word that ought not to exist for a great legislator—for nothing in the slow developement of events is sudden—all incidents are the effects of causes, and the causes should be regulated, not the effects repaired);—if ever we should establish, as our political creed, that a STATE should never be taken by surprise, nor the minds of its administrators be occupied in hasty shifts, in temporary expedients, in the petty policies and bolsterings up and empirical alteratives of the Hour; if ever we should learn to legislate afar off, and upon a great system—preparing the Public Mind and not obeying—masters of the vast machine and not its tools; if ever that day should arrive, I apprehend that one of the first axioms we shall establish will be this: Whatever is meant for the benefit of the people shall not be left to chance operation, but shall be administered by the guardians of the nation. Then, sir, we shall have indeed, as Prussia and Holland already enjoy—as France is about to possess—A NATIONAL EDUCATION. Without incessant watchfulness—without one unsleeping eye for ever over Public Institutions—they become like wastes and commons, open apparently to all, productive of benefit to none.

Never was this truth more clearly displayed than in the state of our popular education. Be-

hold our numberless charities, sown throughout the land.—Where is their fruit?—What better meant, or what more abused? In no country has the education of the poor been more largely endowed by individuals—it fails—and why? Because in no country has it been less regarded by the government. Look at those voluminous Reports, the result of Lord Brougham's inquiry into Charities, some thirteen years ago. What a profusion of Endowments! What a mass of iniquities! Let me once more evoke from the ill-merited oblivion into which it hath fallen, the desolate and spectral instance of Pocklington School! Instance much canvassed, but never controverted! This school is largely endowed; it has passed into decay; its master possessed an income of 900*l.* a-year! How many boys do you think were taught upon that stipend?—*One!*—positively one! Where is the school itself?—The school, sir! it is a sawpit! Where is the schoolmaster?—Lord bless you, sir, he is hiding himself from his creditors! Good Heavens! and is there no one to see to these crying abuses?—To be sure, sir, the Visiters of the school are the Master and Fellows of St. John's, Cambridge.* Now then, just take a drive

* It seems, however, by a letter (imputed to Dr. Ireland, Vicar of Croydon,) to Sir William Scott, that the omission of the worthy Master and Fellows of St. John's in exercising their visitorial powers, originated in the uncertainty of their right rather than any neglect of duty. But uncertainty of a right,

to Berkhamstead; that school is very richly endowed; the schoolmaster teaches one pupil, and the usher resides in Hampshire!

These are but two out of a mass of facts that prove how idle are endowments where the nation does not appoint one general system of vigilant *surveillance*—how easily they are abused—with what lubricity they glide from neglect into decay!

But if the poor have been thus cheated of one class of schools, they have been ousted from another. Our ancestors founded certain great schools (that now rear the nobles, the gentry, and the merchants) for the benefit of the poor. The Charter-house—Winchester—King's College, were all founded for "pauperes et indigentes scholares," poor and indigent scholars. In 1562, 141 sons of the inhabitants of Shrewsbury were at that ancient school, 125 of whom were below the ranks of squires or bailiffs. From the neighbouring district there came 148 boys, of whom 123 were below the rank of squire, *so that out of* 289 *boys*, 248 *were of the lower or middle class!* Our age has no conception of the manner in which education spread and wavered; now advancing, now receding, among the people of the *former* age.

where such revenues, such public benefits were concerned! Can there be a greater evidence of abuse? What long neglect must have produced that uncertainty! Is not this a proof that educational endowments cannot be left to the inspection of distant Visiters, however respectable and honest as individuals?

And, reverently be it said, the novels of Scott have helped to foster the most erroneous notions of the ignorance of our ancestors—a tolerable antiquarian in ballads, the great author was a most incorrect one in facts.* At that crisis of our history, a crisis, indeed, of the history of Europe, which never yet has been profoundly analyzed, I mean the reign of Richard II. the nobles wished to enact a law to repress the desire of knowledge that had begun to diffuse itself throughout the lower orders. The statute of Henry VIII. prohibits reading the Bible privately—to whom? To lords and squires?—No!—to husbandmen and labourers, artificers or servants of yeomen. A law that could scarcely have occurred to the legislators of the day, if husbandmen, labourers, artificers, or servants of yeomen, had been *unable to read at all!* The common investigator ponders over the history of our great Church Reform: he marvels at the readiness of the people to assist the king in the destruction of the monasteries—those charitable superstitions by which such large masses of the Population were supported; he is amazed at the power of the king—at the rapidity of the revolution. He does not see how little it was the work

* "*Equally* distinguished," said Lord Salisbury of Sir Walter Scott, at a meeting at the Mansion-house in aid of the Abbotsford subscription—"*equally* distinguished as a poet, an historian, and an antiquarian."—That was not saying much for him as a poet! God defend our great men in future from the panegyrics of a marquis!

of the king, and how much the work of the people; he does not see that the growth of popular education had as much to do with that Reform as the will of the grasping Tudor. Let me whisper to him a fact: Within thirty years prior to that Reformation, more grammar-schools had been established than had been known for 200 years before! Who, ignorant of that fact, shall profess to instruct us in the history of that day? The blaze is in Reform, but the train was laid in Education. As the nobles grew less warlike, they felt the necessity of intelligence for themselves;* the court of the schoolmaster replaced that of the baron; their sons went to the schools originally intended for the humbler classes, the gentry followed their example, and as the school was fed from a distance, the abashed and humiliated pupils of the town diminished. Another proof how Custom weans institutions from their original purpose;—how, if left to the mercy of events, the rich, by a necessary law of social nature, encroach upon the poor;—how necessary it is for the education of the people, that a government should watch over its endowments, and compel their adherence to their original object.

A great progress in popular education was made

* Latimer complains with great bitterness, "that there are none now but great men's sons at college;" and that "the devil hath got himself to the university, and causeth great men and esquires to send their sons thither, and put out *poor scholars* that should be divines."

fifty years ago, by the establishment of Sunday Schools, and the efforts of the benevolent Raikes, of Gloucester; a still greater by the Bell and Lancaster systems in 1797 and 1798. The last gave an impetus to education throughout the country. And here, sir, let us do justice to the clergy of our established church. No men have been more honourably zealous in their endeavours to educate the poor. They have not, perhaps, been sufficiently eager to enlighten the poor *man;* but they have cheerfully subscribed to educate the poor *boy*. I find them supporters of the Sunday and Infant Schools, of the School Societies, &c.; but I never see them the encouragers of Mechanics' Institutes, nor the petitioners against the Taxes upon Knowledge. Why is this? the object in both is the same. Education closes not with the boy—education is the work of a life. Let us, however, be slow to blame them; it may be that, accused by indiscriminate champions of knowledge, they have not considered the natural effects of the diffusion of knowledge itself. They may imagine, that knowledge, unless chained solely to religious instruction, is hostile to religion. But, for the poor, religion must be alway; they want its consolations; they solace themselves with its balm. Revelation is their Millennium—their great Emancipation. Thus in America,* knowledge is the

* In an oration delivered at Philadelphia by Mr. Ingersoll, in 1832, the following fine passage occurs. Speaking of the

most diffused, and Religion is the most fondly, and enthusiastically beloved. There you may often complain of its excess, but rarely of its absence. To America I add the instances of Holland, of Germany, and of Scotland.

I take pleasure in rendering due homage to the zeal of our country's clergy. One-third part of all the children educated in England are educated under their care; and in vindicating them, let us vindicate, from a vulgar and ignorant aspersion, a great truth: The Christian clergy throughout the world have been the great advancers and apostles of education. And even in the darker ages, when priestcraft was to be overthrown, it received its first assaults from the courageous enlightenment of priests.

religious spirit so rife throughout the States, the orator insists on religion as a necessary result of popular power. "Even Robespierre," saith he, "in his remarkable discourse on the restoration of public worship, denounced atheism as inconsistent with equality, and a *crime* of the *aristocracy;* and asserted the existence of a Supreme Being, who protects the poor, and rewards the just, as a popular consolation, without which the people would despair. '*If there were no God,*' said he, '*we should be obliged to invent one.*' This fine sentiment bespeaks truly the sympathies of Republican governments with that faith which the author of Christianity brought into the world; laying its foundations on the corner-stones of equality, peace, good will—*it would contradict all philosophy if this country were irreligious.*" But Mr. Ingersoll errs in attributing the origin of that noble sentiment to Robespierre—it is a quotation from Voltaire; the thought runs thus, and is perhaps the finest Voltaire ever put into words: "Si Dieu n'existoit pas, il faudroit l'inventer."

A far greater proportion of the English population are now sent to school than is usually supposed, and currently stated. I see before me at this moment, a statistical work, which declares the proportion to be only one in 17 for England, one in 20 for Wales. What is the fact? Why, that our population for England and Wales amounts nearly to 14 millions, and that the number of children receiving elementary education in 1828 are, by the returns, 1,500,000. An additional 500,000 being supposed, not without reason, to be educated at independent schools, not calculated in the return.* Thus, out of a population of 14 millions, we have no less than two millions of children receiving elementary education at schools.

In the number of schools and of pupils, our account, on the whole, is extremely satisfactory. Where, then, do we fail? Not in the schools, but in the instruction that is given there: a great proportion of the poorer children attend only the Sunday-schools, and the education of once a week is not very valuable; but generally throughout the primary schools, nothing is taught but a little spelling, a very little reading—still less writing—the Catechism—the Lord's Prayer, and an unexplained unelucidated chapter or two in the Bible;—add to these the nasal mastery of a Hymn, and an undecided conquest over the rule of Addition, and you behold a very finished education for the poor. The schoolmaster and the schoolmistress,

in these academies, know little themselves beyond the bald and meagre knowledge that they teach; and are much more fit to go to school than to give instructions. Now the object of education is to make a reflective, moral, prudent, loyal, and healthy people. A little reading and writing of themselves contribute very doubtfully to that end. Look to Ireland: does not the Archbishop of Cashel tell us, that a greater proportion of the peasantry in Ireland, yes, even in Tipperary, can read and write, than can be found amidst a similar amount of population in England? I have been favoured with some unpublished portions of the recent evidence on the Poor-laws. Just hear what Mr. Hickson, a most intelligent witness, says on this head:

Query. "Are you of opinion that an efficient system of National Education would materially improve the condition of the labouring classes?"

Answer. "Undoubtedly; but I must beg leave to observe, that something more than the mere teaching to read and write is necessary for the poorer classes. Where books and newspapers *

* I am happy to find in this witness a practical evidence of the advantage of repealing the stamp duty on newspapers, an object which I have so zealously laboured to effect.—"I believe," says he, in his answer to the Commissioners, "that the Penny Magazines will work usefully, but cheap newspapers would do much more good. I have found it difficult to create an interest in the mind of an ignorant man on matters of mere general literature; but his attention is easily enlisted by a narra-

are inaccessible, the knowledge of the art of reading avails nothing; I have met with adults who, after having been taught to read and write when young, have almost entirely forgotten those arts for want of opportunities to exercise them."

"At the Sunday-schools," observes Mr. Hickson, afterwards, "of most Dissenters, nothing is taught generally—I except rare instances—but reading the Bible and repeating Hymns."

While we have so many schools organized, and while so little is taught there, just let me lead your attention to the four common class-books taught at all the popular schools of Saxe Weimar.

The first class-book is destined for the youngest children; it contains, in regular gradations, the alphabet, the composition of syllables, punctuation, elementary formation of language, slight stories, sentences or proverbs of one verse upwards, divers selections, sketches, &c. "The sentences," says M. Cousin, "struck me particularly—they contain, in the most agreeable shapes, the most valuable lessons, which the author classes under systematic titles—such as our duties to our-

tive of the stirring events of the day, or local intelligence. * * * The dearness of newspapers in this country is an insurmountable obstacle to the education of the poor. I could name twenty villages within a circuit of a few miles, in which a newspaper is never seen from one year's end to the other."—*Evidence of Mr. Hickson* (unpublished).

selves, our duties to men, our duties to God—and the knowledge of his divine attributes,—so that in the germ of Literature, the infant receives also the germ of Morals, and of Religion!"

The second book for the use of children from eight to ten is not only composed of amusing sketches—the author touches upon matters of general utility. He proceeds on the just idea that the knowledge of the faculties of the soul ought a little to precede the more profound explanations of religion;—under the head of dialogue between a father and his children; the Book treats first, of a man and his physical qualities; secondly, of the nature of the soul and of its faculties, with some notions of our powers of progressive improvement and our heritage of immortality; and, thirdly, it contains the earliest and simplest elements of natural history, botany, mineralogy, &c.

The third work contains two parts, each divided into two chapters: the first part is an examination of man as a rational animal—it resolves these questions: What am I? What am I able to do? What *ought* I to do? It teaches the distinction between men and brutes—instinct and reason—it endeavours to render the great moral foundations of truth clear and simple by familiar images and the most intelligible terms.

As the first chapter of this portion exercises the

more reflective faculties, so the second does not neglect the more acute, and comprises songs, enigmas, fables, aphorisms, &c.

The second part of the third work contains first, the elements of natural history in all its subdivisions—notions of geography—of the natural rights of man—of his civil rights—with some lessons of general history. An Appendix comprises the geography and especial history of Saxe Weimar. The fourth book, not adapted solely for Saxe Weimar, is in great request throughout all Germany; it addresses itself to the more advanced pupils;—it resembles a little the work last described, but is more extensive on some points; it is equally various, but it treats in especial more minutely on the rights and duties of subjects—it proceeds to conduct the boy, already made rational as a being, to his duties as a citizen. Such are the four class-books in the popular schools of Saxe Weimar, such are the foundation of that united, intellectual, and lofty spirit which marks the subjects of that principality.*

Pardon me if I detain you, sir, somewhat longer on the important comparison of England

* I know nothing we more want in this country than good class-books for the use of popular schools; books that shall exercise the judgment and teach children to *reflect*. Such works should be written by a person of philosophical mind, practised in education, and linked to no *exclusive system*, the curse of knowledge in this country.

with other states. Pardon me, if from the petty duchy of Saxe Weimar, which to the captious may seem so easy to regulate, I turn to the kingdom of Prussia, containing a population almost similar to our own; and like our own also broken up into a variety of religious sects. There, universal education is made a necessary, pervading, paramount, principle of the state. Let us see what is there taught at the popular schools, established in every district, town, and village, throughout the kingdom.

The Prussian law, established in 1819, distinguishes two degrees in popular education, *les écoles élémentaires, et les écoles bourgéoises.*

What is the object of these two schools—the law thus nobly explains: "To develope the faculties of the soul, the reason, the senses, and the physical frame. It shall embrace religion and morals, the knowledge of size and numbers, of nature, and of man, the exercises of the body, vocal music, drawing, and writing."

"Every elementary school includes necessarily the following objects:

"Religious instruction for the formation of Morality, according to the positive truths of Christianity.

"The Language of the Country.

"The Elements of Geometry and the general principles of Drawing.

"Practical Arithmetic.

"The Elements of Physical Philosophy, of Geography, of general History; but especially of the history of the pupil's own country. These branches of knowledge (to be sparingly and drily taught? *No!* the law adds) to be taught and retaught as often as possible, by the opportunities afforded in learning to read and write, independently of the particular and special lessons given upon those subjects.

"The Art of Song—to develope the voice of children—*to elevate their minds**—to improve and ennoble both popular and sacred melodies.

"Writing and the gymnastic exercises, which fortify all our senses, especially that of sight.

"The more simple of the manual arts, and some instructions upon agricultural labour."

Such is the programme of the education of elementary schools in Prussia; an education that exercises the reason, enlightens the morals, fortifies the body, and founds the disposition to labour and independence. Compare with that programme our Sunday-schools, our dame-schools, all our thrifty and meagre reservoirs of miserly education! But what, sir, you will admire in the Prussian system is not the laws of education only, but the spirit that framed and pervades the laws—the full appreciation of the dignity and objects of men—of the duties of citizens—of the powers, and

* Fancy an English act of Parliament gravely stating in its preamble that its object is "to elevate the mind!"

equality, and inheritance of the human soul. And yet in that country the people are said to be less *free* than in ours!—how immeasurably more the people are *regarded!*

At the more advanced school—(*L'Ecole Bourgeoise*)—are taught,

"Religion and Morals.

"The National tongue; Reading, composition, exercises of style and of the invention; the study of the National Classics.

"Latin is taught to all children, under certain limitation, *n order to exercise their understanding;** —even whether or no they are destined to advance to the higher schools, or to proceed at once to their professions or trades.

"The Elements of Mathematics, and an accurate and searching study of practical Arithmetic.

"Physical Philosophy, so far as the more important phenomena of Nature are concerned.

"Geography and History combined; so as to give the pupil a knowledge of the divisions of the Earth, and the History of the World.—Prussia, its History, Laws, Constitution, shall be the object of especial study.

"The principles of Drawing, at all occasions.

* This is the great object of other studies, that may seem at first superfluous; such as the elements of geography or mathematics. It is not for themselves that they are useful—it is for the manner in which they task and exercise the faculties: the knowledge, comparatively speaking, is nothing—the *process* of acquiring it is every thing.

"Writing, Singing, and Gymnastic Exercises."

This is the education given by Prussia to all her children. Observe, here is no theory—no programme of untried experiments:—this is the actual education, actually given, and actually received. It is computed that thirteen out of fifteen children from the age of seven to that of fourteen are at the public schools: the remaining two are probably at the private schools, or educated at home; so that the *whole* are educated—and *thus* educated! Observe, this is no small and petty state easily managed and controlled—it is a country that spreads over large tracts—various tribes—different languages—multiform religions: the energy of good government has conquered all these difficulties. Observe, the account I give is taken from no old—no doubtful—no incompetent authority: it is from the work just published—not of a native, but a foreigner;—not of a credulous tourist—not of a shallow book-maker, but of an eye-witness—of an investigator;—of a man accustomed to observe, to reflect, to educate others;—in a word—of one of the profoundest and most eminent men in France—of a counsellor of state—of a professor of philosophy—of a Member of the Royal Council of Public Instruction—of a man who brings to examination the acutest sagacity—who pledges to its accuracy the authority of the highest name—it is the report of Victor Cousin! He undertakes the investi-

gation—he publishes the account—at the request of a French minister, and to assist in the formation of a similar system in France. I have introduced some part of his evidence,* for the first time, to the notice of English readers, that they may know what *can* be done by seeing what *is* done—that they may resent and arouse the languor of their own government by a comparison with the vivifying energy of government elsewhere. I know that in so doing I have already kindled a spark that shall not die. In the phrase of Cousin himself, with the exception of one word, "It is of Prussia that I write, but it is of *England* that I think!"

As this subject is one of immense importance, (though somewhat dry, perhaps, for the ordinary reader,) I have pursued it further in detail, and those interested in the question will find in the Appendix (A) the result of my observations.—I have therein suggested the outline of a practical system of Universal Education—I have advocated the necessity of making religion a vital component of instruction—I have shown in what manner (by adopting the wise example of Prussia) we can obviate the obstacles of hostile sects, and unite

* This work appeared long before M. Cousin's Report was translated into English, or any notice had been given of it in any of our Reviews; and it has therefore been the *first* to introduce to the emulation of our countrymen the educational system of Prussia.

them in a plan of education which shall comprehend religion, yet respect all religious differences. In giving the heads of a national education, I have shown also in what manner the expenses may be defrayed.

Before I conclude, I must make one reflection. Whatever education be established, the peace and tranquillity of social order require that in its main principles it *should be tolerably equal*, and that it should penetrate everywhere. We may observe (and this is a most important and startling truth) that nearly all social excesses arise, not from intelligence, but from *inequalities* of intelligence. When Civilization makes her efforts by starts and convulsions, her progress may be great, but it is marked by terror and disaster;—when some men possess a far better education than others of the same rank, the first are necessarily impelled to an unquiet Ambition, and the last easily misled into becoming its instruments and tools: Then vague discontents and dangerous rivalries prevail—then is the moment when demagogues are dangerous and visionaries have power. Such is the Spirit of Revolutions, in which mankind only pass to wisdom through a terrible interval of disorder. But where Intelligence is equalized—and flows harmonious and harmonizing throughout all society—then one man can possess no blinding and dangerous power over the mind of another—then demagogues are harmless and theories safe. It is

this equality of knowledge, producing unity of feeling, which, if we look around, characterizes whatever nations seem to us the most safe in the present ferment of the world—no matter what their more material form of constitution—whether absolute Monarchy or unqualified Republicanism. If you see safety, patriotism, and order in the loud democracy of America, you behold it equally in the despotism of Denmark, and in the subordination of Prussia. Denmark has even refused a free constitution, because in the freedom of a common knowledge she hath found content. It is with the streams that refresh and vivify the Moral World as with those in the Material Earth—*they tend and struggle to their level!* Interrupt or tamper with this great law, and city and cottage, tower and temple, may be swept away. Preserve unchecked its vast but simple operation, and the waters will glide on in fertilizing and majestic serenity, to the illimitable ocean of Human Perfectibility.

CHAPTER IV.

VIEW OF THE STATE OF RELIGION.

National Character evinced in the varying Modes of Christianity —Religion must not be separated from the Emotions and made solely a matter of Reason—A Semi-liberalism common to every Noblesse—Its debasing effects—Coldness in the Pulpit—Its Cause—The influence of the Higher Classes on Religion—Church Patronage—Description of Country Clergymen—Evidence of the Bishop of London upon New Churches—Another (a political) Cause of Weakness in the Established Church—But the Established Church should (if reformed) be preserved—Reasons in favour of it—But if a State Religion, it should become more a Portion of the State.

It is an acute, though fanciful observation of Gibbon's that "in the profession of Christianity, the variety of national characters may be clearly distinguished. The natives of Syria and Egypt abandoned their lives to lazy and contemplative devotion: Rome again aspired to the dominion of the world, and the wit of the lively and loquacious Greeks was consumed in the disputes of metaphysical theology." If we apply the notion to existing times, we may suppose also that we trace in the religion of the Germans their contemplative repose, and household tenderness of sentiment;

in that of the Americans, their impatience of control, and passion for novel speculations; that the vain and warlike French stamp on their rites their passion for the solemnities of show, and the graces of stage effect; while the commercial and decorous inhabitants of England manifest in their religion, their attachment to the decency of forms, and the respectability of appearances. Assuredly, at least amongst us, the outward and visible sign is esteemed the best, perhaps the only, token of the inward and spiritual grace. We extend the speculations of this world to our faith in another, and give credit to our neighbour in proportion to his external respectabilities.

There is, sir, in this country, and in this age, a certain spirit of rationalism, the result of that material philosophy which I shall hereafter contend we have too blindly worshipped; a certain desire to be logical in all things; to define the illimitable, and demonstrate the undemonstrable, that is at variance with the glowing and ardent devotion which Religion, demanding eternal sacrifice of self interests and human passions, must appear to a larger wisdom necessarily to demand. A light and depreciating habit of wit taught the people of France the desire of moderating belief by reason, till with them belief, deprived of its very essence, has almost ceased to exist at all. In England, that soberizing love of what is termed common sense, that commercial aversion from the

Poetical and Imaginative, save in the fictitious alone, which characterizes this nation, tends greatly to the same result. The one people would make religion the subject of wit, the other, more reverent, but not more wise, would reduce it to a matter of business. But if we profess religion at all, if we once convince ourselves of its nobler and more exalting uses, of its powers to elevate the virtues, as well as to check the crimes, of our kind, we must be careful how we tear it from the support of the emotions, and divorce from its allegiance the empire of the heart.

To comprehend the effects, to sustain the penalties, to be imbued with the ardour of religion, we must call up far more trustful and enterprising faculties than reason alone; we must enlist in its cause all the sentiment and all the poetry of our nature. To the great work of God we must apply the same order of criticism we apply to the masterpieces of men. We do not examine the designs of Raffaelle, or the soaring genius of Milton, with mathematical analogies. We do not eternally ask, with the small intellect of the logician, "What do they prove?" We endeavour to scan them by the same imagining powers from which they themselves were wrought. We imbue our notions with the grandeur of what we survey, and we derive from, not bring to, that examination alone, the large faith of that ideal and immaterial philosophy, which we reject alone

when we examine what still more demand its exercise—the works of God.

Ambition—Glory—Love—exercise so vast an influence over the affairs of earth, because they do not rest upon the calculations of reason alone; because they are supported by all that constitutes the Ideal of Life, and drink their youth and vigour from the inspiring Fountains of the Heart. If Religion is to be equally powerful in its effects—if it is to be a fair competitor with more worldly rivals—if its office is indeed to combat and counterbalance the Titan passions which, for ever touching earth, for ever take from earth new and gigantic life—if it is to

> "Allure to brighter worlds, and lead the way,"

—it must call around itself all the powers we can raise; to defeat the passions, the passions must feed it; it can be no lukewarm and dormant principle, hedged in, and crippled by that reason which, in our actions, fetters nothing else. It has nothing to do with rationalism; it must be a sentiment, an emotion, for ever present with us—pervading, colouring, and exalting all. Sensible of this, the elder propagators of all creeds endeavour to connect them, equally as love and glory, with the poetry of life. Religion wanes from a nation, as poetry vanishes from religion. The creeds of states, like their constitutions, to renew their youth, must return to their first principles.

It is necessary for us at this time to consider deeply on these truths; for many amongst us, most anxious perhaps to preserve religion, are for ever attempting to attenuate its powers. Rationality and Religion are as much contradictions in terms as Rationality and Love. Religion is but love with a sacred name, and for a sacred object—it is the love of God. Philosophy has no middle choice; it can decide only between scepticism and ardent faith.

There is a sort of semi-liberalism, common to the aristocracies of all nations, and remarkable in the Whig portion of the aristocracy in this, which is favourable neither to pure religion nor to high morality; it is the result of a confined knowledge of the world, the knowledge of circles and coteries. Men who run a course of indolence and pleasure, acquire in the career an experience of the smaller and more debasing motives of their kind; they apply that experience universally. They imagine that all professions are hollow, from their conviction of the hypocrisies common with the great. With them, indeed, virtue is but a name; they believe in sober earnest, the truth of Fielding's ironical definitions:

"Patriot—A candidate for place.

"Politics—The art of getting one.

"Knowledge—Knowledge of the Town.

"Love—A word properly applied to our delight in particular kinds of food;

sometimes *metaphorically* spoken of the favourite objects of our appetites.

" Virtue
" Vice } Subjects of discourse.
" Worth—Power, rank, wealth.
" Wisdom—The art of acquiring all three."

This code they propagate through the means of the influence which we call Fashion; and morality becomes undermined by a disbelief in its existence. Mignet has observed profoundly that "in revolutions a man soon becomes what he is believed." In ordinary times, a whole people may become what they are constantly asserted to be. The Romans preserved a species of rude and gigantic virtue, so long as they were told it was natural to Romans. The patrician *roués* preceding Cæsar's time, set the fashion of asserting the corruptibility of all men, till what was declared to be common ceased to be a disgrace.

When we once ridicule the high and the generous, the effect extends to our legislation and our religion. In Parliament, the tone is borrowed from the profligates of a club. Few venture ever to address the nobler opinions, or appeal to the purer sentiments; and the favourite cast of oratory settles into attacks upon persons, and insinuations against the purity of parties.

A fellow-member of the present House of Commons—a man of great knowledge, and imbued with

* *Covent-Garden Journal*, No. 3.

all the high philosophy we acquire in our closets, from deep meditation over settled principles, and a conviction that law-making ought to be the science of happiness — expressed to me very eloquently the disgustful surprise with which he found that the great characteristic of that assembly was the constant appeal to the lowest passions, and the incredulous ridicule that attached to all who professed the higher ones. It is not so with other popular assemblies; but it *is* so with the members of the National one: meeting every morning at clubs, and knowing intimately the motives of each other—they catch the sort of cleverness that characterized the friends of the Regent Orleans—a cleverness that depreciates and suspects—they write upon their minds the motto, "No cant!" and what they do not comprehend they believe to be insincere,—as if there were a species of honesty which consisted in denying honesty itself!

This habit of mind vulgarises the tone of eloquence, and we may trace its effect from the senate to the pulpit. A love for decencies, and decencies alone—a conclusion that all is vice which dispenses with them, and all hypocrisy which would step beyond them—damps the zeal of the established clergy: it is something disreputable to be too eloquent; the aristocratic world does not like either clergymen or women to make too much noise. A *very* popular preacher, who should, in

the pulpit, be carried away by his fervour for the souls of his flock, who should use an extemporaneous figure of speech, or too vehement a gesticulation, would be considered as betraying the dignity of his profession.—Bossuet would have lost his character with us, and St. Paul have run the danger of being laughed at as a mountebank.

Walk into that sacred and well-filled edifice,—it is a fashionable church: you observe how well cleaned and well painted it is; how fresh the brass nails and the red cloth in the gentlefolk's pews; how respectable the clerk looks—the curate, too, is considered a very gentlemanlike young man.—The rector is going to begin the sermon: he is a very learned man, people say he will be a bishop one of these days, for he edited a Greek play, and was private tutor to Lord Glitter.—Now observe him—his voice, how monotonous!—his manner, how cold!—his face, how composed! yet what are his words?—"Fly the wrath that is to come.—Think, of your immortal souls. Remember, oh, remember! how terrible is the responsibility of life! how strict the account! how suddenly it may be demanded!" Are *these* his words? they are certainly of passionate import, and they are doled forth in the tone of a lazy man saying, "John, how long is it to dinner?" Why, if the calmest man in the world were to ask a gamekeeper not to shoot his favourite dog, he would speak with a thousand times more energy; and yet this preacher

is endeavouring to save the souls of a whole parish —of all his acquaintance—all his friends—all his relations—his wife (the lady in the purple bonnet, whose sins no man doubtless knows better) and his six children, whose immortal welfare must be still dearer to him than their temporal advancement; and yet what a wonderful command over his emotions! I never saw a man so cool in my life. "But, my dear sir," says the fashionable purist, "that coolness is decorum; it is the proper characteristic of a clergyman of the established church."

Alas! Dr. Young did not think so, when, finding he could not impress his audience sufficiently, he stopped short and burst into tears.

Sir, Dr. Young was a great poet; but he was very well known not to be entirely orthodox.

This singular coldness—this absence of eloquence, almost of the appearance of human sympathy, which characterize the addresses of the Established Church, are the result of the Aristocratic influences, which, setting up Ridicule as the criminal code, produce what is termed *good taste* as the rule of conduct. The members of the Aristocracy naturally give the tone to the members of the Established Church, and thus the regard for the conventional quiet of good breeding destroys the enthusiasm that should belong to the Preacher of Religion. A certain bishop, a prelate of remarkable sense and power of mind, is so sen-

sible of the evils that may result to religion itself from this almost ludicrous lukewarmness of manner in its pastor, that he is actually accustomed to send such young clergymen as he is acquainted with to take lessons in delivery from Mr. Jones, the celebrated actor, in order that they may learn to be warm, and study to be in earnest.

The critical axiom "to make me feel, you must seem yourself to feel," is as applicable to the pulpit as to the rostrum—to the sermon as the drama.

The eloquent Channing has insisted forcibly upon this point. He proposes, even in his discourse on "*Increasing the Means of Theological Education*," a professorship that shall embrace for its object *sacred eloquence* and instruction in pastoral duty. "It should be designed," saith he, "to instruct candidates for the ministry in the composition and delivery of sermons, and in the best methods of impressing the human mind, and to awaken an enlightened zeal and ardour in the performance of all the offices of ministerial life. What serious and reflective man is not often reminded, on the sabbath, of the painful truth, that some institution is needed to train our ministers for the impressive and effectual discharge of their duty?"

It often happens, when we compare the largeness of the living with the apathy of the preacher, that we cannot but exclaim with the Prince of Conti, "Alas! our good God is but very ill served for his money."

The influence of the higher classes upon religion is frequently pernicious in this—the livings of the Church are chiefly the property of the Aristocracy; and the patron of a benefice naturally and pardonably, perhaps, bestows it, in general, on his own relations or intimate acquaintances. Thus the preaching of salvation really becomes a family office, and the wildest rakes of a college are often especially devoted to the hereditary cure of souls. Any one who has received an university education, knows well how common it is to see among the noisiest and wildest students (student *a non-studendo*) the future possessor of the most tempting specimens of preferment. Let me be just, however, and confess that the consequences are not so flagrantly bad as they would seem to a mere theoretical observer—the rake once made a clergyman, usually alters prodigiously in external seeming—you see very few clergymen in the English Church of known licentious habits, or notoriously prone to excesses. The decorum which numbs the generous fervour of virtue restrains the irregular tendencies to vice—the moral air chills and controls the young pastor suddenly transplanted to it, and he puts on with his snowy surplice a correspondent external of decent life. But though the neophyte ceases to be a *bad* man, I doubt exceedingly if he can be said to become a *good* one.* He enters into the common moralities of

* Burnet observes, that "in his time, our clergy had less

social existence: visits feasts, plays a rubber, and reads the *John Bull*, according to the appointed orbit of hebdomadary pursuits. But where that continued self-sacrifice—where that ex-

authority, and were under more contempt, than those of any other church in Europe, for they were much the most remiss in their labours and the least severe in their lives—*it was not that their lives were scandalous; he entirely acquitted them of any such imputation, but they were not as exemplary as it became them to be.*"—*Southey's Wesley*, p. 324.

Mr. Southey himself allows the cause for the past complaint, though he would start from conceding it in the present, viz.—that the ecclesiastics, owing to individual Lay patronage, are not enough taken from the people, and too much from the gentry. Just observe the truth and logical soundness of the following passage: "Under the Reformed as well as under the Romish establishment, the clerical profession offered an easy and honourable provision for the younger sons of the *gentry*; but the Church of Rome had provided stations for them, where, if they were not qualified for active service, their sins of omission would be of a very trivial kind. The Monasteries had always a large proportion of such persons—they went through the ceremonies of their respective rules, &c.—their lack of ability or learning brought no disgrace to themselves, for they were not in a situation where either was required, and their inefficiency was not injurious to the great establishment of which, though an inert, they were in no wise an inconvenient body. *But when such persons, instead of entering the convents which their ancestors had endowed, were settled upon family livings as parochial clergy, then indeed a serious evil was done to the character of the church, and to the religious feelings of the nation—their want of aptitude or inclination for the important office into which they had been thrust, then became a fearful thing for themselves and a miserable calamity for the people committed to their charge.*"

The evil cause still exists. Believe me, Mr. Southey, that the emulation to which Wesley excited the establishment, produced but a momentary cure of the evil effect.

alted charity—where that intimate familiarity with the poor—that unwearied exertion for their comfort, their education, their improvement—that household sympathy with their wants—that tender control over their conduct, which Goldsmith might paint, but which Oberlin practised?—you find these virtues in many of our clergy, but not in that class to which I now refer. There is a wide chasm between the flock and the shepherd—the orbit of the preacher may be regular, but it throws little light or warmth upon the habitations of the poor.

It will be easily seen that this separation between the clergyman and the humbler portion of his charge, and which is so peculiar to England, is the result of the same influence, visible throughout the whole workings of the social system. The aristocratic doctrine which makes it so imperiously necessary for clergymen to be "gentlemen"—which makes the pastor a member of an aristocratic profession—renders him subject to all the notions of the aristocracy; it makes him passionless in the pulpit, but decorous in his habits, and it fits him rather, not to shock the prejudices of the drawing-room, than to win the sympathies of the cottage. Grant him the best intentions, his situation scarcely allows him to execute them; if he be rich, or well endowed, he must keep up his dignity, or his parish is too large to go all over it himself. He gives soup and coals, and ministers

to public charities, but he does not make himself a household name in every poor man's hearth.* He is respected, not influential from the very distance at which he is respected. He is a good man, but he is too great a man. You may say of his tribe as Bacon says of the philosophers, "They are as the stars, which give little light because they are so high." Now, take the poor curate, these are not the dignified difficulties of situation which surround him, but he has his own. He is poor, but he is a gentleman; he is proud, he knows his birth and station, he cannot let himself down. *He has his very poverty to keep up.* He can preach to the boor, he can pity him, nay he will pinch himself to relieve, but he can scarcely visit him very often. Thus a certain pride attends the established preachers of humility, and feudal distinctions exist in religion while they vanish from politics. Charity ceases to be sympathy and becomes condescension. In order to see this more closely, let me here (first reminding the reader that we have remarked how much the aristocratic influences must pervade the clergy who on the aristocracy depend) state a fact which may be found in the Evidence in the Parliamentary

* The Bishop of London says truly, in his evidence before Sir A. Agnew's Committee, that "*Mere sermons from the pulpit, with reference to the lower classes, will seldom effectually inculcate any religious duty, if the clergyman does not follow up his instruction by private conversations.*" How rare are such conversations!

Committee on the better Observance of the Sabbath. My Lord Bishop of London, permit me to address you, you whose clear judgment and wise piety adorn, and will, I trust, contribute to reform the Establishment. You assert in your evidence before the Committee that you are frustrated in your benevolent desire, that in the new churches the seats of the poor should be distributed among those of the rich, in order that the former might be so enabled to hear better the common word of God;—you assert that you are frustrated by what?—*the refusal of the rich whose contributions sustain the churches,* to allow so undignified an admixture! What an exemplification of the religion of the aristocracy—they subscribe to build churches, but on condition of retaining there the distinctions which out of church separate them from the poor! This principle undermines the safety of the establishment, and operates on the clergymen who are their younger sons, or were brought up at college with themselves. We unhappily direct that "The gorgeous palaces and the solemn temples" shall stand in the same street, be lighted by the same lamps, and guarded by the same watchmen!

But while many of the established preachers are thus apart from the poor, the dissenters are *amongst* them, are *of* them: vehement in the pulpit, they address the passions of their flock;—familiar at their hearths, they secure their sympa-

thies. Thus the poor choose some dissenting, instead of the established sect, much on the same principle as in the Tonga Islands it is customary for the inhabitants to choose a foster-mother even during the life of their natural parent, "with a view," says Mariner, "of being better provided with all necessaries and comforts." The mother church is indolent in dispensing spiritual consolation, in visiting intimately, in comforting, in cheering the poor; the foster-mother is sedulous and unwearied in these duties, for without such care she would receive no attachment in return. And she thus gradually weans from the first parent the love that she attracts towards herself.

There is another cause of weakness in the Established Church proceeding from that aristocratic composition which appears a part of its very strength. Its members never harmonize with the people in political opinion; they often take a severe and active course in direct opposition to the wishes of the Popular Heart. As a body, they are and profess themselves to be, wound up with the anti-popular and patrician party: whereas, the greater part of the dissenting sects are, more or less, favourers of the popular side; the latter thus acquire power by consulting opinion, and become the rulers of the poor by affecting to be their friends. Even where, in the case of the loyal and subordinate Wesleyan, the politics generally may incline to the powers

that be, some individual point, some isolated but stirring question—to-day the Slavery Question, to-morrow the Factory Bill, occurs, on which the Wesleyan, no less than the bold and generous "Independent," is united with the most popular opinions. For I know not how it is, sir, but it seems to me, that wherever a man is very active on some point of humanity, he always finds himself suddenly surrounded by the great body of the English People.

Let me not, however, be misconceived; I would not desire the preachers of a serene and passionless Religion to mix themselves ostentatiously with the politics of the day, or to be seen amidst the roar and tumult of democratic action; but surely, if they ought not to be active in support of the people, it is like laying a mine of gunpowder beneath their spiritual efficiency and their temporal power, to be distinguished in activity *against* them. Every unpopular vote of the bishops is a blow on the foundation of the church. Religion is the empire over the human heart; alienate the heart, the empire necessarily departs. But if, sir, the composition of the church establishment were less exclusively aristocratic; if its members, as in its days of power and of purity, sprang more generally from the midst of the great multitudes they are to rule,* I apprehend that while they would be

* The vulgar notion that "clergymen must be gentlemen born," is both an upstart and an insular opinion. Not so have

equally on the side of order and of strong government, their principles would be less exposed than at present to suspicion, and would seem to the people dictated rather by the sacred spirit of peace, than by the oligarchical and worldly influence of temporal connexions. And thus, sir, by a far-sighted and prophetic sagacity, thought the early patriarchs, and mighty men, of the Reformation. It is they who complained that general zeal and diffused learning would cease to be the characteristics of the clergy, exactly in proportion as the

thought the great founders of all powerful sects; not in so poor and small a policy has experience taught us that ecclesiastical influence is created. Look over the history of the world. Look how the mighty Papacy grew and spread. Her great men were chosen from the people, and so they connected and mingled themselves with the people's prejudices and love. Look (to take a lesser view of the question), look at the great divines, who are the light and galaxy of our own church. From what descent came the bold virtue of Latimer? What hereditary blood animated that unfaltering tongue which preached chastity to the Eighth Henry, and was eloquent with courage at the stake? Latimer was a yeoman's son! From whom came the studious thought, and the serene charity, and the copious *verve* of Barrow? Barrow was the son of a London trader. What progenitor claimed the subtle mind of Clarke, the champion of God himself?—A plain citizen of Norwich. To the middle class belonged the origin of the sturdy Warburton; of the venerable Hooker; of the gentle Tillotson, once the standard of all pulpit persuasion. From amongst the ranks of the people rose Taylor, the Milton of the church, whose power and pathos, and "purple grandeur" of eloquence, beautified even piety itself. In fact the births of our great divines may be said to illustrate the principle of every powerful church, which draws its vigour from the multitude, and languishes only when confining its social influences to a court.

church should become more an established provision for the younger sons of the great. It is they who predicted that when the people saw none of their own order officiating in the ministry, the divine sympathy between flock and preacher would decay, and the multitude would seek that sympathy elsewhere, in schisms and sects. The lethargy of the Established Church is the life of Dissent.

But if the true benefit and natural influence of our Establishment be thus thwarted and diminished, let us seek to remedy, and not destroy it. Hume's aphorism, that where the support of the ecclesiastic depends wholly upon the people, he stimulates their zeal by all the quackeries of fanaticism, is, to my mind, amply borne out by the experience of America; it is not that religion is lost for want of an Establishment, but that it splits into a thousand forms, each vying with the other in heated and perverting extravagance. For the people never abandon a faith that flatters and consoles them; they are too apt, on the contrary, to carry it to excess. A mild and tolerant Establishment presents to the eye a certain standard of sober sense; and sectarianism thus rather forsakes the old abuses, than wanders with any wide success into new. I hold, that an abolition of our ecclesiastical establishment would, in this country, be followed up by a darkening and gloomy austerity. For nearly all sectarianism with us is indisposed to the

arts, and the amusements that grace and brighten existence; and were the Church no more, one sect vying with the other in religious zeal, the result would be an emulation of severities, and of mutual interference with the sunny pleasures of life. So that exactly the disposition we ought the most to discourage (in England especially, too prone to it already), we should the most strengthen and unite. The Church, with all the failings it inherits from a too violent and therefore incomplete Reform at first, and a too rigid resistance to Reform subsequently, has still, in England, been a gentle, yet unceasing, counterpoise to any undue spirit of fanatical hypochondria. With all its aristocratic faults, too, we may observe, that in the rural districts it has often helped to resist the aristocratic ignorance of the country gentry. More enlightened than the mere squire, you will find the clerical magistrate possessing a far clearer notion of the duties of his office than the lay one; and nine times out of ten, wherever the Poor-laws have been well administered by a neighbouring magistrate, that magistrate is a clergyman.* I leave, sir, your admirable argument untouched. I leave the reader to recall to his remembrance how wisely you have defended the establishment of churches, upon the same broad principle as that on which we defend the establishment of schools, viz. that mankind do not feel the *necessity* of religion and

* Vide the Report of the Poor Law Commissioners (*passim*).

of knowledge so pressingly as they feel that of clothing and food; and the laws that regulate the physical supply and demand are not, therefore, applicable to those that regulate the moral; that we ought to leave men to *seek* the one, but we ought to *obtrude* upon them the other. What I insist upon is this—that an established church and sectarianism operate beneficially on each other; that a tolerated, instructed sect, incites the zeal of the establishment; and where *that* lies oppressed beneath abuses, it directs the Christian public to those abuses themselves: that, on the other hand, the sober and quiet dignity of an Establishment operates as a pressure upon the ebullitions of sectarian extravagance. Every man sees the errors of our Establishment, but few calculate the advantage of an Establishment itself. Few perceive how it carries through the heart of the nation, not only the light of the Gospel, but a certain light also of education—how it operates in founding schools for the poor, and exciting dissenters to a rivalry in the same noble benevolence—how, by emulation, it urges on the sectarian to instruct himself as well as others—how, by an habitual decorum of life in its members, it holds forth to all dissenters a steadfast example, from which they rarely swerve—and how a perpetual competition in good works tends to a perpetual action of energy and life in their execution. If this be the principle of an ecclesiastical

establishment, we have only to preserve, by purifying, the principle. And if I have rightly argued, that it is from too unmixed an aristocratic composition, owing to individual patronage, that most of the present failings of the Establishment arise, we have only to transfer, as far as we safely and prudently can, the patronage of the Establishment from individuals to the state. In a free state, ever amenable to publicity, the patronage of the state, rightly administered, will become the patronage of the people; but free from the danger that would exist were it dependent on the people alone. Public opinion would watch over the appointments; they would cease to be *family concerns;* they would cease to be exclusively aristocratic. A more wise and harmonious mixture of all classes, from the higher to the lower, would ensue; and the greater openness of general honour to merit, would encourage zeal, but not the zeal of fanaticism. Pastors would cease to be brought in wrangling and hostile collision with their flock, and, with a more rooted sympathy with the people than exists at present, the clergy would combine the sway of a serener dignity. In the Church, as with Education, and with the Poor-laws, the most efficacious administration of a complicated machinery, is the energy of a Free-State.

CHAPTER V.

THE SABBATH.

Theological error of the Puritans—Over-restraint produces Overlooseness—The Preservation of the Sabbath regarded in a legislative point of view—Two Causes of Demoralization connected with its infringement—How amended—Amusement better than Idleness, the French Boor and the English—Instruction better than Amusement—Rope-Dancer and Philosopher—Ridiculous Questions of the Sabbath Committee—Two Deductions to be drawn from it—The Evidence before it—Corroboration of the Principle of this Work.

THE keeping holy the sabbath-day is a question which does not seem to me to have been placed upon fair and legislative grounds of consideration. That the Sunday of the Christian is not the Sabbath of the Jews is perfectly clear; that in the early ages of the church, it was set apart as a day of recreation, as well as of rest, is equally indisputable; the first reformers of our English church continued to regard it in this light, and upon that cheerful day games were permitted to the poor, and tournaments to the rich. The

spirit of puritanism distinguished from that of the established church was mainly this—the former drew its tenets and character principally from the *Old* Testament, the latter from the New. The puritans, therefore, by a gross theological error, adopted the rigid ceremonial of the Hebrew sabbath, which our Saviour in fact had abolished, and for which all His earlier followers had substituted a milder institution.* The consequence of overstraining the ceremonial has, in England, invariably been this—as one order of persons became more rigid, another class became more relaxed in

* The early Christians concurred in keeping the day of the Lord (so called, previous to the introduction of Christianity, because it was the day of the *Lord the Sun*) with mirth and festivity. We learn from Justin the reason why it was thus kept; namely, because it was the first day, in which God made the world, and because on that day Christ rose from the dead. Associated with the joyous recollections of the creation of the world and the resurrection of the dead, it was natural to hallow that day with a glad and even a gay character of worship; and thus we find the early Councils stigmatizing the rigid cessation of work on the Sunday as an absolute heresy—in a word, *as judaizing*. The reformers of our own Church adhered to the same interpretation of the Christian Sunday: and in an act passed in the reign of Edward VI., clergymen are called upon to reprove those who should abstain from work on the Lord's Day from "any grudge or scrupulosity of conscience." Who then first formally introduced the present notion of the sabbath? It was one Dr. Bound, who, 1200 years after the public establishment of the Christian worship under Constantine, proclaimed the propriety of adopting for the Christian Sunday the forms of the Jewish sabbath. Dr. Bound obtained his disciples in the Puritans, and his Tertullian in Sir Andrew Agnew!

their observance of church rites and worship. When it was a matter of general understanding that the fore part of the day was set apart for worship, and the latter part for recreation, if everybody indulged in the latter, everybody also observed the former. But when one class devoted the whole day to ritual exaction and formal restraint, and this too with an ostentatious pedantry of sanctification—by a necessary reaction, and from an unavoidable result of ridicule, the other class fell into an opposite extreme. Political animosities favoured the sectarian difference, and to this day, there are two classes of reasoners on the sabbath, one asking for too much, and the other conceding too little. Perhaps nothing has more marred the proper respect that all classes should pay to the sabbath, than the absurd and monstrous propositions of Sir Andrew Agnew.

But, putting aside the religious views of the question, the spirit of good legislation requires that if any gross and evident cause of demoralization exists, we should attempt to remove it.

It appears (and this is highly satisfactory) by the evidence on Sir A. Agnew's committee, that the sabbath is generally observed by all orders except the poorest,* that churches are filled as soon

* The greater part of the more "respectable" metropolitan tradesmen are anxious for an effectual prohibition of Sunday trading, but I suspect not so much from piety as from a jealousy of the smaller shopkeepers, who, by serving customers on Sun-

as built, and that even those seats reserved for the working classes are usually thronged. The poorer part of the working classes are in large towns alone lax in their attendance—we inquire the cause, and we find it nearly always in the effects of habitual intemperance. Now having got to the root of the evil, for that only ought we to legislate. There are two causes that favour intoxication on the Sunday; these we may endeavour to remedy, not only because they injure the holiness of the sabbath, but because they taint the morality of the state.

There are two causes; the first is the custom of paying wages on a Saturday night;—a day of entire idleness ensuing, the idler and more dissipated mechanic, especially in the metropolis, goes at once to the gin-shop on the Saturday night, returns there on the Sunday morning, forgets his wife and his family; and spends on his own vices, the week's earnings that should have supported his family. Now, if he were paid on Friday night, and went to work on Saturday morning, he would have an imperious inducement not to disable himself from work; the temptation of money just received, would not be strengthened by a prospect

day, either lure away the customers on Monday also (supposing the greater tradesmen rigidly decline "to oblige" on the sabbath), or, by compelling the "more respectable" to do business also, prevent their running down to their country villas and driving *their own gigs*.

of being drunk with impunity, because he would have the indolent next day to recover the effects. The money would probably come into the hands of his wife, and be properly spent in the maintenance of the family. He who knows any thing of the mind of the uneducated poor man, knows that it is only in the first moment of receiving money that he is tempted to spend it indiscreetly—and if he received it on Friday, by Sunday morning the novelty would be a little worn off. This alteration would be attended, I am convinced, with the most beneficial results, and where it has been tried already it has met with very general success.

The law indeed ought to legislate for Saturday rather than Sunday; for all the police agree, (and this is a singular fact) that there are more excesses committed on a Saturday night than any night in the week, and fewer excesses of a *Sunday* night!

The second course that favours intemperance as connected with the sabbath, is the opening of gin-shops to a late hour on Saturday, and till eleven on Sunday morning: not only the temptation to excess, but the abandoned characters that throng the resort, make the gin-shop the most fatal and certain curse that can befal the poor. The husband goes to drink, the wife goes to bring him out, and the result is, that she takes a glass to keep him company or to console herself for his faults. Thus the vice spreads to both sexes, and falls betimes on their children. These resorts might, especially

in the Metropolis, be imperatively shut up on Sunday, and at an early hour on Saturday. Beyond these two attempts to remedy the main causes of demoralization on the sabbath, I do not think that it would be possible to legislate with success.

But so far from shutting up whatever places of amusement are now open, it is clear, that all those which do not favour drunkenness, are so many temptations to a poor man not to get drunk. Thus, tea-gardens a little removed from towns (if *not* licensed on Sunday to sell any kind of spirits, for here the law might go to the verge of severity) would be highly beneficial to the morals of the working orders. They are so even now. We have the evidence of the police, that instances of excess or disorder at these places of recreation are very rare; and the great advantage of them is this, a poor man can take his wife and daughters to the tea-garden though he cannot to the gin-shop; selfishness (the drunkard's vice) is counteracted, the domestic ties and affections are strengthened, and the presence of his family imposes an invisible and agreeable restraint upon himself. I consider that it is to the prevalence of amusements in France which the peasant or artisan can share with his family, that we are to ascribe the fact that he does not seek amusement *alone*, and the innocent attractions of the *guinguette* triumph over the imbruting excesses of the *cabaret*.

Riding through Normandy one beautiful Sunday evening, I overheard a French peasant decline the convivial invitation of his companion. "Why—no thank you," said he, "I must go to the *guinguette* for the sake of my wife and the young people, dear souls!"

The next Sunday I was in Sussex, and as my horse ambled by a cottage, I heard a sturdy boor, who had apparently just left it, grumble forth to a big boy swinging on a gate, "You sees to the sow, Jim, there's a good un; I be's jist a gooing to the Blue Lion *to get rid o' my missus and the brats, rot 'em!*"

We see by a comparison with Continental nations, that it is by making the sabbath dull that we make it dangerous. Idleness must have amusement or it falls at once into vice; and the absence of entertainments produces the necessity of excess. So few are the harmless pleasures with us on the sabbath, that a French writer, puzzled to discover any, has called the English Sunday, with a most felicitous *naïveté*, "*jour qu'on distingue par un* POUDING!" Save a pudding he can find no pleasurable distinction for the Holy Day of the week!

But while, sir, I think that innocent and social pleasures are the first step toward an amelioration of the consequences produced by a day of idleness to the poor, I am perfectly prepared to concede a more lofty view of the moral reform that we may

effect in the maintenance of that day. Serious contemplation and instructive reading improve the mind even more than the gentle cheerfulness of recreation. Man has high aims and immortal destinies before him; it is well that he should sometimes ponder upon them, "commune with his own heart and be still." But this we cannot enforce by law; we can promote it, however, by education. In proportion as the poor are enlightened, they will have higher and purer resources than mere amusement to preserve them from drunkenness and vice; and even in pursuing amusement they will not fall readily into its occasional temptations. Give opportunities of innocence to the idle, and give opportunities of preventing idleness itself, by the resources of instruction.

In short, with the lower orders, as education advances, it will be as with the higher,—the more intellectual of whom do not indulge generally in frivolous amusements, solely because *it amuses them less* than intellectual pursuits.

"Why do you never amuse yourself?" said the rope-dancer to the philosopher.—"That is exactly the question," answered the philosopher, astonished, "that I was going to ask *you!*"

But, sir, there is one very remarkable deduction, to which nearly all the witnesses on the evidence for a Sabbath Reform have arrived, and which, as nobody yet has remarked, I cannot

conclude this chapter without touching upon. I pass over the extraordinary interrogatories which the legislative wisdom deemed advisable to institute, of which two may be considered a sufficient sample. Some sapient investigator asks what class of persons were in the habit of attending the beer-shops, to which the unlooked-for answer is, "The lower classes." This seems to surprise the interrogator, for he asks immediately afterwards *if the better classes don't resort there as well?*

Again, the Committee summons before it a Mr. M'Kechney, agent to a flour-factor, and on the principle, I suppose, that you should question a man on those points with which his previous habits have made him acquainted, some gentlemen appear to have discovered a mysterious connexion between a knowledge of flour and a knowledge of beards. This witness is accordingly examined touching the expediency of Saturday shaving. His answer is bluff, and decided:—"It is MY OWN OPINION," quoth he, "that a poor man can get shaved on a Saturday night; and *that he would have as good an appearance on Sunday morning!*"—A startling affirmation, it must be allowed, and one evincing a deep knowledge of the chins of the poor.

I pass over, however, these specimens of Phil-Agnewian acuteness, tempting and numerous as they are, and I come to the deduction I referred to. The whole of the evidence, then, is a most

powerful attack upon the influence of the aristocracy—to their example is imputed all the crime of England: for first, all crime is traced to sabbath-breaking; and secondly, sabbath-breaking is imputed to the aristocratic influences of evil. Mr. Rowland, of Liverpool, affirms that divers reports of metropolitan evil-doings on the sabbath, perpetrated by the great, travel down to that distant town, and are the common excuse to the poor for sabbath-breaking. Mr. Ruell, chaplain of the Clerkenwell prison, after deposing that he did not know "a single case of capital offence where the party has not been a sabbath-breaker," is asked, whether the prisoners of the different prisons he has known, when reproved for their misdemeanors, have made any observations on the habits of the higher classes of society. Mark his answer—it is very amusing. "Frequently," saith he; "and it would be difficult for me to describe the shrewdness with which their remarks are often made. Some have been so pointed in reference to persons in the higher ranks, *as to call forth my reproof.*"—Wickedly proceedeth Mr. Ruell to observe, that "they take a peculiar pleasure in referring to any remarkable departure from the principles of religion or morality among the great; as affording a sort of sanction to their own evil conduct." This he calls "the great barrier he has found in his ministry to impressing the minds of the lower orders with a sense of religion and

moral order." But more anti-aristocratic than all, is the evidence of the philosophical and enlightened Bishop of London. "It is difficult," says he, with deliberate authoritativeness, "to estimate the degree in which the labours of the Christian ministry are impeded, especially in towns, by the evil example of the rich!" That most able prelate, insisting afterwards on the necessity of "legislating very tenderly for the poor" on offences shared with impunity by their betters, contends that "the influence of the higher classes, were their example generally exemplary, would prevent the necessity of any religious legislation for the poor." He confesses, however, "that he entertains no hope of such a state of things being speedily brought to pass."

Now, sir, observe first, that while all the evidence thus summoned imputes the fault to the great, all the legislative enactments we have been and shall be called upon to pass, are to impose coercion solely upon the poor; and observe, secondly, I pray you, the great vindication I here adduce in favour of certain tenets which I have boldly advanced. If it be true that the negligent or evil example of the aristocracy be thus powerfully pernicious (not, we will acknowledge, from a design on their part, but—we will take the mildest supposition—from a want of attention—from a want of being thoroughly aroused to the nature and extent of their own influence),—if this be

true, how necessary, how called for have been the expositions of this work, how successfully have I followed out the bearings of Truth in proving that whatever moral evil has flowed downward among the people has, not according to the disciples of a rash and inconsiderate radicalism, emanated from the vices of a Monarchy or of an Established Church, but from the peculiar form and fashion of our aristocratic combinations, from the moral tone they have engendered, and the all-penetrating influence they have acquired! In so doing, without advancing a single violent doctrine, without insisting on a single levelling innovation, but rather, in the teeth of the vulgar policy, advocating an energetic State and a providing Government, I have helped to correct the mischief of a peculiar power, by summoning it to the bar of that Public Opinion, by whose verdict power exists. This is the true legislative benefit of an investigating research. Exhibit the faults of any description of moral influence, and it is impossible to calculate how far you have impaired its capacities of mischief.

CHAPTER VI.

STATE OF MORALITY.

A popular Error confuted, by tracing the origins of Morality, Religion, and Philosophy—Importance of studying Morality as a Science—Invariable Injury both to Religion and Morals, where Ecclesiastics *alone* have taught Morality—Advantage to Religion in the cultivation of Moral Science—The English backward in the Science, hence Faults in their Morality—Erroneous Laws—Distinction between public and private Virtue—Regard to Appearances—Anecdote of the Opera-dancer—Abstract Science necessary to practical Results—Religious Rules misapplied—Bishop, the Murderer—Public Charities—Too much Influence assigned to Fear—Want of Morality shown in Taxes—Gin-drinking—Progress of Intemperance—Singular Evidence on that point—Too exclusive a regard for Sexual Decorum baffles itself—State of Licentiousness in this Country—All our Notions vague and vacillating—Want of Moral Science leaves the Influences to the World, hence exaggerated respect to Wealth and Station.

THERE are many persons who desire that we should never learn Morality as a separate science—they would confine it solely to theological expositions, and make ecclesiastics its only lecturers and professors—this is a common error in English opinion, it proceeds from the best intentions—it produces very dangerous consequences both to morality and to religion itself. These

reasoners imagine and contend that religion and morality have the same origin, that they are inseparable. Right notions on this head are very important, let us see the origin of the two; I fancy we shall find by one minute's inquiry, that nothing can be more distinctly separate—we shall see the mode by which they became connected, and the inquiry will prove the vital expedience of cultivating morality as a science in itself.

When men first witness the greater or the less accustomed phenomena of Nature, they tremble, they admire, they feel the workings of a superior power, and they acknowledge a God! Behold the origin of all Religion save that of Revelation!

When men herd together, when they appoint a chief, or build a hut, or individualize property in a bow or a canoe, they feel the necessity of obligation and restraint—they form laws—they term it a duty to obey them.* In that duty (the result of utility) behold the origin of Morality! †

But the Deity whom they have bodied forth from their wonder and their awe, men are naturally desirous to propitiate—they seek to guess what

* If we adopt the metaphysics of certain schools, we may suppose the origin both of religion and of morality to be in inherent principles of the mind; but even so, it might be easily shown that they are the result either of different principles or of utterly distinct operations of the same principle.

† Thus, the origin of law and morals is simultaneous, but not exactly similar. The necessity of *framing* a law originates law, the utility of *obeying* law originates morality.

will the most please or the most offend their unknown Divinity. They invest Him with their own human attributes, carried only to a greater extent; by those attributes they judge him: naturally, therefore, they imagine that such violations of morality as interrupt the harmony of their own state must be displeasing to the Deity who presides over them. To the terror of the Law they add that of the anger of God. Hence the origin of the connexion between Religion and Morality.

These two great principles of social order were originally distinct, the result of utterly different operations of mind. Man, alone in the desert, would have equally conceived Religion; it is only when he mixes with others, that he conceives Morality.*

But men anxious to please the Deity—to comprehend the laws by which He acts upon the physical and the mental nature—beginning first to adore—proceed shortly to examine. Behold the origin of philosophy. Survey the early tribes of the world. Philosophy is invariably the offspring of Religion. From the Theocracy of the East came the young Sciences, and Reason commenced her progress amidst the clouds and darkness gathered round the mystic creeds of Egypt, of Persia, and of Ind. But inquiring into the nature

* A flash of lightning may strike upon the mind the sense of a Superior Being; but man must be in fear of man before he learns the utility of moral restraint.

of the Creator, and the consequent duties of man, Philosophy, if the *result* of religion, becomes necessarily the *science* of morals. Examining the first, it elucidated the last; and as human wisdom is more felicitous in its dealings with the Known and Seen than with the Unexperienced and the Invisible, so the only redeemer of the ancient extravagance in religion, has been the ancient exposition of morals. The creeds are dead—the morals survive—and to this very day make the main part of our own principles, and (kneaded up with the Christian code) are the imperishable heritage that we must transmit (but that we ought also to *augment*) to our posterity.

Thus then have I briefly shown the distinctive origin of Religion and of Morals; how Philosophy naturally born from the first, enlightens the last, and how fortunate it hath been for the world that philosophy, not confining its speculations to theology, has cultivated also morality as a science.

How, in an artificial society, is it possible to look to religion *alone* for our *entire* comprehension of *all* morals? Religion is founded in one age, and one country; it is transmitted, with its body of laws, to another age and country, in which vast and complicated relations have grown up with time, which those laws are no longer sufficient to embrace. As society has augmented its machinery, it is more than ever necessary to preserve Morality as the science that is to guide its innumerable

wheels. Hence the necessity of not taking our moral knowledge only from the ecclesiastics; or, in pondering over truths which the religion of a different age and time transmits to us, disdain the truths which religion has necessarily omitted; for religion could not be embraced by every tribe, if it had prescribed the minutiæ necessary only to one. Consequently, we find in history, that in those ages have existed the most flagrant abuses and misconceptions in morality, wherein Religious Tuition has been the *only* elucidator of its code. Why refer you to the more distant periods of the world—to those of Egyptian and Indian, and Celtic and Gothic, priestcrafts?—take only the earlier Papacy and the Middle Ages:—Philosophy banished to the puerilities grafted upon an emasculated Aristotelism, inquiring "whether stars were animals; and, in that case, whether they were blest with an appetite, and enjoyèd the luxuries of the table"—left Morality the sole appanage and monopoly of the priests. Hence, as the Priests were but human, they prostituted the science to human purposes; they made religious wars, and donations to the church, the great Shibboleth of Virtue; and the monopoly of Morality became the corruption of Religion.

It is right, therefore, that the science of moral philosophy should be pursued and cultivated in all its freedom and boldness, as the means, not to supplant, but to corroborate—to furnish and fol-

low out—to purify and to enlarge the sphere of—religious instruction. Even such of its expounders as have militated against revealed religion, and have wandered into the Material and the Sceptical, have only tended in a twofold degree to support the life and energies of religion. For in the first place, arousing the ability, and stimulating the learning of the Church, they have called forth that great army of its defenders which constitute its pride; and without its maligners, and its foes, we should not have been enabled at this day to boast of the high names which are its ornaments, and its bulwark. In the second place, the vigilance of philosophy operates as a guardian over the purity of religion, and preserves it free from its two corruptions—the ferocity of fanaticism, and the lethargy of superstition. So that as Rome was said to preserve its virtue by the constant energy and exercise to which it was compelled by the active power of Carthage, the vigour of religion is preserved by the free and perpetual energy of philosophical science.*

It is, sir, I think, partly owing to some unconsidered prejudices in regard to this truth, some ignorant fear for religion, if morality should be

* Dr. Reid has said with great beauty of language, "I consider the sceptical writers to be a set of men whose business it is to pick holes in the fabric of knowledge wherever it is weak and faulty, and when those places are properly repaired, the whole building becomes more firm and solid than it was formerly."

elucidated as a distinct and individual science, that we see a fatal supineness in this country towards the exercise of metaphysical pursuits, that we feel an obstacle to the correction of public errors in the apathy of public opinion, and that at this moment we are so immeasurably behind either Germany or France in the progress of ethical science. Not so in that country which your birth and labours have adorned. While for more than a century we have remained cabined and confined in the unennobling materialism of Locke, Scotland has at least advanced some steps towards a larger and brighter principle of science; the effect of the study of philosophy has been visible in the maintenance of religion. I firmly believe that Scotland would not at this moment be so religious and reverent a community but for the thousand invisible and latent channels which have diffused through its heart the passion for moral investigation. And the love for analytical discussion that commenced with Hutcheson has produced the dematerializing philosophy of Reid.

Wherever I look around on the state of morality in this country, I see the want of the cultivation of moral science. A thousand of the most shallow and jejune observations upon every point of morality that occurs, are put forth by the press, and listened to by the legislature. Laws are made, and opinions formed, and institutions recommended upon the most erroneous views of

human nature, and the necessary operations of the mind. A chasm has taken place between private and public virtue: they are supposed to be separable qualities; and a man may be called a most rascally politician, with an assurance from his asperser "that he does not mean the smallest disrespect to his *private character!*" Propping morality merely on decorums, we suffer a low and vulgar standard of opinion to establish itself amongst us; and the levelling habits of a commercial life are wholly unrelieved and unelevated by the more spiritual and lofty notions, that a well-cultivated philosophy ever diffuses throughout a people.

I have heard an anecdote of a gentleman advertising for a governess for his daughters:—an opera-dancer applied for the situation: the father demurred at the offer: "What!" cries the lady, "am I not fit for the office? Can I not teach dancing, and music, and French, and manners?"—"Very possibly—but still—an opera-dancer—just consider!"—"Oh! if that be all," said the would-be governess, "*I can change my name!*" I admire the *naïveté* of the dancer less than her sagacity; she knew that nine times out of ten, when the English ask for virtues, they look only to the name!

By a blind and narrow folly, we suppose in England that the abstract and the practical knowledge are at variance. Yet just consider: every

new law that will not apply itself to the people,—that fails,—that becomes a dead letter,—is a proof that the legislature were ignorant either of the spirit of law or the mind of the people upon whom it was to operate,—is a proof that the Law was not practical from the deficiency of its framers in abstract experience. In no country are so many ineffectual laws passed, and we might ask for no other proof to show that in no country is there greater ignorance of the science of moral legislation—a branch of moral philosophy.

From this want of cultivating ethical investigation we judge of morals by inapplicable religious rules. Bishop, the murderer, was considered by the newspapers to have made his peace with God, and to be entitled to a cheerful slumber, because he did—what? Why, because he confessed to the ordinary of Newgate the method in which he had murdered his victim! Public Charities, as we have seen, so fatal in their results upon the morality of the people, unless most carefully administered, are considered admirable *in themselves;* the turbulence and riot, and bribery and vice of elections are deemed *necessary* components of liberty. Some men adhere to the past without comprehending its moral; others rush forward to experiments in the future, without a single principle for their guide. Would-be-improvers know not what they desire, and popular principles become the mere pander to popular delusions.

When religion is unaided by moral science, there is ever a danger that too much shall be left to the principle of *fear*. "To preach long and loud damnation," says the shrewd Selden, "is the way to be cried up. We love a man who damns us, and we run after him again to save us." This common principle in theology is transferred to education and laws. We train our children* by the rod. We govern our poor by coercion. We perpetually strive to debase our kind by terror instead of regulating them by reason. Yet not thus would the grand soul of Bossuet have instructed us, when in that noble sermon "*Pour la Profession de Madame de la Valliere*," the great preacher seeks to elevate the soul to heaven. He speaks not then of terror and of punishment, but of celestial tenderness, of the absence of all dread under the Almighty wings. "What," he cries, "is the sole way by which we approach God and are made perfect?—It is by love alone." A profound truth, which in teaching us a nobler spirit of religion, instructs us also in the three principles of education, of morals, and of laws. But Bossuet's address is not of the fashion established amongst us!

* So Wesley, who often concluded his sermon with "I am about to put on the condemning cap—I am about to pass sentence upon you: 'Depart from me ye accursed into everlasting fire,'" advises also the repeated flogging of children, and insists upon the necessity of "breaking their spirit."—*See Southey's Life of Wesley.*

I trace the same want of moral knowledge in our fiscal impositions. Some taxes are laid on which must necessarily engender vice; some taken off as if necessarily to increase it. We have taxed the diffusion of knowledge more than a hundred per cent.; the consequence is, the prevention of legal knowledge, and the diffusion of smuggled instruction by the most pernicious teachers. We have diminished the duty upon gin, and from that day commenced a most terrible epoch of natural demoralization. "Formerly," says the wise prelate I have so often quoted, "when I first came to London, I never saw a female coming out of a gin-shop; I have since repeatedly seen females with infants in their arms, to whom they appear to be giving some part of their liquor."

Our greatest national stain is the intemperance of the poor; to that intemperance our legislators give the greatest encouragement;—they forbid knowledge; they interfere with amusement; they are favourable only to intoxication.

For want, too, of extending our researches into morality, the light breaks only the darkness immediately round us, and embraces no ample and catholic circumference. Thus, next to our general regard for appearance, we consider morality only as operating on the connexions between the sexes. Morality, strictly translated with us, means the absence of licentiousness—it is another word for one of its properties—chastity; as the word pro-

fligacy bears only the construction of sexual intemperance. I do not deny that this virtue is one of immense importance. Wherever it is disregarded, a general looseness of all other principles usually ensues. Men rise by the prostitution of their dearest ties, and indifference to marriage becomes a means of the corruption of the state. But as the strongest eyes cannot look perpetually to one object without squinting at last, so to regard but one point of morals, however valuable, distorts our general vision for the rest. And what is very remarkable among us, out of the exclusiveness of our regard to chastity, arises the fearful amount of prostitution which exists throughout England, and for which no remedy is ever contemplated. Our extreme regard for the chaste induces a contemptuous apathy to the *un*chaste. We care not how many there are, what they suffer—or how far they descend into the lower abysses of crime. Thus, in many of the agricultural districts, nothing can equal the shameless abandonment of the female peasantry. Laws favouring bastardy promote licentiousness—and, as I have before shown, the pauper marries the mother of illegitimate children, in order to have a better claim on the parish. In our large towns an equally systematic contempt of the unfortunate victims, less, perhaps, of sin than of ignorance and of poverty, produces consequences equally prejudicial. No regard, as in other countries, by

a rigid police order, is paid to their health, or condition; the average of their career on earth is limited to *four years*. Their houses are unvisited—their haunts unwatched—and thus is engendered a fearful mass of disease, of intemperance, and of theft. Too great a contempt for one vice, rots it, as it were, into a hundred other vices yet more abandoned. And thus, by a false or partial notion of morality, we have defeated our own object, and the exclusive intolerance to the unchaste, has cursed the country with an untended and unmedicated leprosy of prostitution.

To the want, too, of a cultivation of morality as a science, all its rules are with us vague, vacillating, and uncertain: they partake of the nature of personal partiality, or of personal persecution. One person is proscribed by society for some offence which another person commits with impunity. One woman elopes, and is "the abandoned creature;" another does the same, and is only "the unfortunate lady."—Miss —— is received with respect by the same audience that drove Kean to America. Lady —— is an object of interest, for the same crime as that which makes Lady —— an object of hatred. Lord —— ill uses and separates from his wife—nobody blames him. Lord Byron is discarded by his wife, and is cut by society. * * * * is a notorious gambler, and takes in all his acquaintance—everybody courts him—he is a man of fashion. Mr. ——

imitates him, and is shunned like a pestilence—*he* is a pitiful knave. In vain would we attempt to discover any clue to these distinctions—all is arbitrary and capricious; often the result of a vague and unmerited personal popularity—often a sudden and fortuitous reaction in the public mind, that, feeling it has been too harsh to its last victim, is too lenient to its next. Hence, from a lack of that continuous stream of ethical meditation and instruction, which, though pursued but by a few, and on high and solitary places, flows downward, and, through invisible crevices and channels, saturates the moral soil,—Morality with us has no vigor and no fertile and organized system. It acts by starts and fits—it adheres to mere forms and names—now to a respect for appearances—now to a respect for property:—clinging solely with any enduring strength, to one material and worldly belief which the commercial and aristocratic spirits have engendered, viz. in the value of station and the worth of wealth.

CHAPTER VII.

WHAT OUGHT TO BE THE AIM OF ENGLISH MORALISTS IN THIS AGE.

Influence of Moral Philosophy upon the World—Evils of our exclusive Attention to Locke—Philosophy the Voice of a certain Intellectual Want—What is that Want in our Day—What should be the true Moral to inculcate—Picture of a Moralist.

It seems, then, that owing to the natural tendencies of trade and of an imperfect and unelevating description of aristocracy, the low and the mercantile creep over the national character, and the more spiritual and noble faculties are little encouraged and lightly esteemed. It is the property of moral philosophy to keep alive the refining and unworldly springs of thought and action; a counter attraction to the mire and clay of earth, and drawing us insensibly upward to a higher and purer air of Intellectual Being. Civilized life with its bustle and action, the momentary and minute objects in which it engages and frets the soul, requires a perpetual stimulus to larger views

and higher emotions; and where these are scant and feeble, the standard of opinion settles down to a petty and sordid level.

In metaphysical knowledge, England has not advanced since Locke. A few amongst us may have migrated to the Scotch school—a few more may have followed forth the principles of Locke into the theories of Helvetius—a very few indeed, adventuring into the mighty and mooned sea of the Kantian philosophy, may steer their solitary and unnoticed barks along its majestic deeps; but these are mere stragglers from the great and congregated herd.* The philosophy of Locke is still the *system* of the English, and all their new additions to his morality are saturated with his spirit. The beauty and daring, and integrity of his character—the association of his name with a great epoch in the Liberties of Thought, contribute to maintain his ascendency in the English heart; and his known belief in our immortality has blinded us to the materialism of his doctrines.

Few, sir, know or conjecture the influence which one mighty mind insensibly wields over those masses of men, and that succession of time, which appear to the superficial altogether out of the circle of his control. I think it is to our exclusive attention to Locke, that I can trace much of the unspiritual and material form which our

* Kant, too, has been only introduced to *us* just as Germany has got beyond him.

philosophy has since rigidly preserved, and which, so far from counteracting the *levelling influences of a worldly cast, has strengthened and consolidated them.* Locke, doubtless, was not aware of the results to be drawn from his theories, but the man who has declared that the soul *may* be material*—that by revelation only can we be certain that it is not so—who leaves the Spiritual and the Immortal undefended by philosophy, and protected solely by theology, may well, you must allow, be the founder of a school of Materialists, and the ready oracle of those who refuse an appeal to Theology and are sceptical of Revelation: And therefore it seems to me a most remarkable error in the educational system of Cambridge, that Locke should be *the sole* metaphysician professedly studied—and that while we are obliged to pore over, and digest, and nourish ourselves with, the arguments that have led schools so powerful and scholars so numerous to pure materialism, we study *none* of those writings which have replied to his errors and elevated his system.

It is even yet more remarkable, that while Locke should be the great metaphysician of a clerical University, so Paley should be its tutelary moralist. Of all the systems of unalloyed and unveiled selfishness which human ingenuity ever devised, Paley's is, perhaps, the grossest and most sordid. Well did Mackintosh observe that

* Essay on the Human Understanding, book iv. chap. 3.

his definition of Virtue, alone is an unanswerable illustration of the debasing vulgarity of his code. "Virtue is the doing good to mankind, in obedience to the will of God, and *for the sake of everlasting happiness.*" So that any act of good to man in obedience to God, if it arise from any motive but *a desire of the reward which he will bestow*—if it spring from pure gratitude for past mercies, from affectionate veneration to a protecting Being—does not come under the head of virtue; nay, if, influenced solely by such purer motives, the mind altogether escape from the mercenary desire of rewards—its act would violate the definition of virtue, and, according to Paley, would become a vice!* Alas for an University, that adopts materialism for its metaphysical code, and selfishness for its moral!

Philosophy ought to be the voice of a certain intellectual want in every age. Men, in one period, require toleration and liberty; their common thoughts demand an expounder and enforcer. Such was the want which Locke satisfied—such his service to mankind! In our time we require but few new theories on these points already established. Our intellectual want is to enlarge and spiritualize the liberty of thought we have acquired—the philosophy of one age advances by incorporating the good, but correcting the error of

* See Mackintosh's Dissertation in the Supplement to the *Encyclopædia Britannica.*

the last. This new want, no great philosopher has appeared amongst us to fulfil.*

But there are those who feel the want they cannot supply; if the lesser Spirits and Powers of the age are unable to furnish forth that philosophy, they can expedite its appearance; and this by endeavouring to dematerialize and exalt the standard of opinion—to purify the physical and worldly influences—to decrust from the wings of Contemplation the dust that, sullying her plumes, impedes her flight—to labour in elevating the genius of action, as exhibited in the more practical world of politics and laws—to refine the coarse, and to ennoble the low; this, sir, it seems to me, is the true moral which the infirmities of this present time the most demand, and which the English writer and the English legislator, studying to benefit his country, ought to place unceas-

* What I principally mean to insist upon is this—Philosophy ought to counteract whatever may be the prevalent error of the Popular opinion of the time. If the error were that of a fanatical and stilted excess of the chivalric principle—Philosophy might do most good by insisting on the counteracting principles of sobriety and common sense;—but if the error be that of a prevalent disposition to the sordid and worldly influences—Philosophy may be most beneficial by going even to extremes in establishing the more generous and unselfish motives of action. Hence one reason why no individual School of Philosophy can be permanent. Each age requires a new representative of its character and a new corrector of its opinions. A material and cold philosophy may be most excellent at one period, and the very extravagance of an idealizing philosophy may be most useful at another.

ingly before him. Rejecting the petty and isolated points, the saws and maxims, which a vulgar comprehension would deem to be morals where they are only truisms, his great aim for England shall be to exalt and purify the current channels of her opinion. To effect this for others, he shall watch narrowly over himself, discarding, as far as the contaminations of custom and the drawbacks of human feebleness will allow, the selfish and grosser motives that he sees operating around him; weaning himself, as a politician, from the ambition of the adventurer, and the low desire of wealth and power; seeking, as a writer, in despite, now of the popular, now of the lordly clamour, to inculcate a venerating enthusiasm for the true and ethereal springs of Greatness and of Virtue; and breathing thus through the physical action and outward form of Freedom, the noble aspirations that belong in states as in men to the diviner excitation of the soul!

Such seems to me the spirit of that moral teaching which we now require, and such the end and destiny that the moralists of our age and nation should deem their own!

APPENDIX.

(A)

POPULAR EDUCATION.

Necessity of a Minister and Board of Instruction—Education has been retarded by the Indiscretion of its Defenders—Necessity of making Religion its Groundwork—The Difficulties of differing Sects how obviated—Reference to Prussia—The Expediency of incorporating Labour Schools with all Intellectual Schools—Heads of a proposed National Education—Schools for Teachers—Evidence adduced of their Necessity and Advantage—How shall the Schools be supported as to Funds?

In my remarks upon Popular Education, I endeavoured to show that it was not enough to found schools without prescribing also the outline of a real education—that a constant vigilance was necessary to preserve schools to the object of their endowment—to protect them from the abusive influences of Time, and to raise the tone and quality of education to that level on which alone it can be considered the producer of knowledge and of virtue. By the parallel of Prussia I attempted to convey a notion of the immense difference of education in that country, which makes education a *state* affair, and this country, in which, with equal zeal, and larger capital, it is left to the mercy of

individuals. If, then, we are to have a general—an universal—education, let it be an education over which the government shall preside. I demand a Minister of Public Instruction, who shall be at the head of the department:—I demand this, 1st, Because such an appointment will give a moral weight and dignity to education itself; 2dly, Because we require to concentre the responsibility in one person who shall be amenable to Parliament and the Public. He shall have a Council to assist him, and his and their constant vigilance and attention shall be devoted to the system over which they preside.

It is indeed true that we cannot transfer to this country the wholesale education of Prussia; in the latter it is compulsory on parents to send their children to school, or to prove that they educate them at home. A compulsory obligation of that nature would, at this time, be too stern for England; we must trust rather to moral than legislative compulsion. Fortunately so great a desire for education is springing up among all classes, that the government has only to prepare the machine in order to procure the supply. Everywhere the feeling is in favour of education, and only two apprehensions are enlisted against it; both of these apprehensions we must conciliate. The first is, lest in general instruction religion should be neglected; the second, lest in teaching the poor to think we should forget that they are born to labour. I say we ought to conciliate both these classes of the timid.

I am perfectly persuaded, that nothing has been more unfortunate for popular education in this country than the pertinacity with which one class have insisted on coupling it *solely* with the *Established* religion, and the alarming expedient of the other class in excluding religion altogether. With

respect to the last, I shall not here pause to enter into a theological discussion ; I shall not speak of the advantage or the disadvantage of strengthening moral ties by religious hopes ; or of establishing one fixed and certain standard of morals, which, containing all the broader principles, need not forbid the more complicated;—a standard which shall keep us from wandering very far into the multiform theories and schisms in which the vagaries of mere speculative moralists have so often misled morality. On these advantages, if such they be, I will not now descant. I am writing as a legislator, desirous of obtaining a certain end, and I am searching for the means to obtain it. I wish, then, to establish an Universal Education. I look round ; I see the desire for it ; I see also the materials, but so scattered, so disorganized are those materials, so many difficulties of action are in the way of the desire, that I am naturally covetous of all the assistance I can obtain.*

* I am happy in this opinion to fortify myself by the expression of a similar sentiment in M. Cousin, in which it is difficult to say whether we should admire most the eloquence or the sagacity, or the common sense. I subjoin some extracts:

" The popular schools of a nation," he says, in recommending the outline of a general education for France to M. Montulivet, " ought to be penetrated with the religious spirit of that nation. Is Christianity, or is it not, the religion of the people of France ? We must allow that it is. Then, I ask, shall we respect the religion of the people, or shall we destroy it ? If we undertake the destruction of Christianity, then, I own, we must take care not to teach it. But if we do not propose to ourselves that end, we must teach our children the faith which has civilized their parents, and the liberal spirit of which has prepared and sustains our great modern institutions. * * * Religion, in my eyes, is the best base of popular instruction. I know a little of Europe ; nowhere have I seen good schools for the people where the Christian charity was *not*. * * * In human societies there are some things for the accomplishment of which Virtue is neces-

I see a vast, wealthy, and munificent clergy, not bent against education, but already anxious to diffuse it, already founding schools, already educating nearly 800,000 pupils;—I look not only to them, but to the influence they command among their friends and flock; I consider and balance the weight of their names and wealth, and the grave sanction of their evangelical authority. Shall I have these men and this power with me or against me? That is the question. On the one hand, if I can enlist them, I obtain a most efficient alliance; on the other hand, if I enlist them, what are the disadvantages? If indeed they tell me that they will teach religion only, and that, but by the mere mechanical learning of certain lessons in the Bible—if they refuse to extend and strengthen a more general knowledge applicable to the daily purposes of life—such as I have described in the popular education of Prussia—*then*, indeed, I might be contented to dispense with their assistance. But *is* this the case? I do not believe it. I have conversed, I have corresponded with many of the clergy, who are attached to the cause of religious education, and no men have ex-

sary; or, when speaking of the great masses, Religion! Were you to lavish the treasures of the state, to tax parish and district, still you could not dispense with Christian charity; or with that spirit of humbleness and self-restraint, of courageous resignation and modest dignity, which Christianity, well understood and well taught, can alone give to the instruction of the poor. * * * It would be necessary to call Religion to our aid, were it only a matter of finance."

If M. Cousin, a philosopher, once persecuted by the priesthood, thus feels the practical necessity of enlisting religion on the side of education in France; the necessity is far greater in England. For here Christianity is far more deeply rooted in the land; here the church is a more wealthy friend or a more powerful foe; here, too, the church is ready to befriend education—there, to resist it.

pressed themselves more anxious to combine with it all the secular and citizen instruction that we can desire. What is it, then, that they demand? What is the sacrifice I must make in order to obtain their assistance? They demand that the Christian religion be constituted the foundation of instruction in a Christian country. You, the Philosopher, say, "I do not wish to prevent religion being taught; but to prevent the jar, and discord, and hindrance of religious differences, I wish to embrace all sects in one general plan of civil instruction; let religious instruction be given by the parents or guardians of the children according to their several persuasions."

I believe nothing can be more honest than the intentions of the philosopher; I know many most excellent Christians of the same way of thinking. But how, sir—I address the philosopher again—how can you for a moment accuse the clergy of the Established Church of intolerance in refusing to listen to your suggestion? How, in common duty, and common conscience, can they act otherwise? Reverse the case. Suppose the churchman said, "We will found a system for the education of the whole people, we will teach nothing but Religion in it, not one word of man's civil duties; not that we wish to prevent the pupil acquiring civil knowledge, but because we wish to avoid meddling with the jarring opinions as to what form of it shall be taught. Whatever civil knowledge the children shall possess, let their parents and guardians teach them out of school, according to their several theories."

Would the philosopher agree to this? No indeed, nor I either. Why then should we ask a greater complaisance from the ecclesiastic? he cannot think, unless he be indeed a mercenary and a hypocrite, the very Swiss of religion—that

religious knowledge is less necessary than civil instruction. He cannot believe that the understanding alone should be cultivated, and the soul forgotten. But in fact, if we were to attempt to found a wholesale national education, in which religious instruction were not a necessary and pervading principle, I doubt very much if public opinion would allow it to be established; and I am perfectly persuaded that it could not be rendered permanent and complete. In the first place, the clergy would be justly alarmed; they would redouble their own efforts to diffuse their own education. In a highly Christian country, they would obtain a marked preference for their establishments; a *certain taint and disrepute would be cast on the national system:* people would be *afraid* to send their children to the National Schools; the ecclesiastical schools would draw to themselves a vast proportion—I believe a vast majority—of children; and thus in effect the philosopher, by trying to sow unity would reap division; by trying to establish his own plan, he would weaken its best principle; and the care of education, instead of being *shared* by the clergy, would fall *almost entirely into their hands.* An education *purely* ecclesiastical would be in all probability bigoted, and deficient in civil and general instruction; the two orders ought to harmonize with, and watch over, and blend into each other. Another consequence of the separation in schools which would be effected by banishing Christian instruction from some in order to give a monopoly of ecclesiastical instruction to others, would probably be not only to throw a taint upon the former schools, but also upon whatever *improvements* in *education* they might introduce. Civil instruction would be confused with *ir*religious instruction, and amended systems be regarded with fear and suspicion. For

all these reasons, even on the ground and for the reasons of the philosopher, I insist on the necessity of making instruction in religion the harmonizing and uniting principle of all scholastic education.

But, how are we to escape from the great difficulty in the unity of education produced by differing sects? In answer to this question, just observe how the government of Prussia, under similar circumstances, emancipates itself from the dilemma. "The difference of religion," says the Prussian law, "is not to be an obstacle in the form of a school society; but in forming such a society, you must have regard to the numerical proportion of the inhabitants of each faith; and, as far as it can possibly be done, you shall conjoin with the principal master professing the religion of the majority—a second master of the faith of the minority."

Again: "The difference of religion in Christian schools, necessarily produces differences in religious instruction. That instruction shall be always appropriate to the doctrines and spirit of the creed for which the schools shall be ordained. But as in every school of a Christian state, the dominant spirit and the one common to all sects, is a pious and deep veneration for God: so every school may be allowed to receive children of every Christian sect. The masters shall watch with the greatest care that no constraint and no undue proselytism be exercised. *Private* and especial masters, of whatever sect the pupil belongs to, shall be charged with his religious education. If, indeed, there be some places where it is *impossible* for the School Committee to procure an especial instructor for every sect; *then*, parents, if they are unwilling their children shall adopt the lessons of the prevailing creed of the school, are entreated

themselves to undertake the task of giving them lessons in their own persuasion."

Such is the method by which the Prussian State harmonizes her system of Universal Education among various sects. That which Prussia can effect in this respect, why should not England? Let us accomplish our great task of Common Instruction, not by banishing all religion, but by *procuring* for every pupil instruction in his own. And in this large and catholic harmony of toleration, I do believe the great proportion of our divines and of our dissenters might, by a prudent Government,* be induced cheerfully to concur. For both are persuaded of the necessity of education, both are willing to sacrifice a few minor considerations to a common end, and, under the wide canopy of Christian faith, to secure, each to each, the maintenance of individual doctrines. I propose then, that *the State* shall establish Universal Education. I propose that it shall be founded on, and combined with, religious instruction. I remove, by the suggestion I have made, the apprehension of contending sects;—I proceed now to remove the apprehension of those who think that the children of the poor, if taught to be rational may not be disposed to be industrious. I propose, that to all popular schools for intellectual instruction, labour, or industry, schools should be appended, or rather, that each school shall unite both objects. I propose, that at the schools for girls, (for in the system I recommend, both sexes shall be instructed,) the various branches and arts

* One of the greatest benefits we derive from an intelligent and discreet government is in its power of conciliating opposing interests upon matters of detail or of *secondary* principles. Where a government cannot do this, depend upon it the ministers are bunglers.

of female employment shall make a principle part of instruction; above all, that those habits of domestic management and activity in which (by all our Parliamentary reports) the poorer females of the manufacturing towns are grossly deficient, shall be carefully formed and inculcated.*

I propose (and this also is the case in Prussia) that every boy educated at the popular schools shall learn the simpler elements of agricultural and manual science, that he shall acquire the habit, the love, and the aptitude of work; that the first lesson in his moral code shall be that which teaches him to prize independence, and that he shall practically obey the rule of his catechism, and learn to get his own living.

Thus then, briefly to sum up, the heads of the National Education I would propose for England are these:

1st, It shall be the business of the state, confided to a Minister and a subordinate Board, who shall form in our various counties and parishes, committees with whom they shall correspond, who shall keep a vigilant eye on the general working, who shall *not* interfere vexatiously with peculiar details.—The different circumstances in different localities must be consulted, and local committees are the best judges as to the mode. I propose that the education be founded on religion; that one or more ministers of the Gospel be in every committee; that every sectarian pupil shall receive

* Schools for girls in the poorer classes are equally important as those for boys. Note in Kay's account of Manchester, the slovenly improvidence of females in a manufacturing town; note in the Evidence on the poor-laws, the idleness, the open want of chastity, the vicious ignorance of a vast class of females everywhere. Mothers have often a greater moral effect upon children than the fathers; if the child is to be moral, provide for the morals of the mother.

religious instruction from a priest of his own persuasion.

I propose that at every school for the poor, the art and habit of an industrious calling make a *necessary* part of education.

A report of the working, numbers, progress, &c. of the various schools in each county should be yearly published; so emulation is excited, and abuse prevented.

If the state prescribe a certain form of education, it need not prescribe the books or the system by which it shall be acquired.

To avoid alike the rashness of theories, and the unimprovable and lethargic adherence to blind custom, each schoolmaster desirous of teaching certain books, or of following peculiar systems such as those of Hamilton, Pestalozzi, &c. shall state his wish to the committee of the county, and obtain their consent to the experiment; they shall visit the school and observe its success: if it fail, they can have the right to prohibit; if it work well, they can have the power to recommend it. So will time, publicity, and experience have fair and wide scope in their natural result, viz. the progress to perfection.

But, above all things, to obtain a full and complete plan of education, there should be schools for teachers. The success of a school depends upon the talent of the master; the best system is lifeless if the soul of the preceptor fail. Each county, therefore, should establish its school for preceptors to the pupils, a preference shall be given to the preceptors chosen from them at any vacancies that occur in the popular schools for children. Here, they shall not only learn to know, but also learn to teach, two very distinct branches of instruction. Nothing so rare at present as competent teachers. Seminaries of this nature have

been founded in most countries where the education of the people has become of importance.* In America, in Switzerland, lately in France, and especially in Germany, their success has everywhere been eminent and rapid. In Prussia M. Cousin devoted to the principal schools of this character, the most minute personal attention. He gives of them a detailed and highly interesting description. He depicts the rigid and high morality† of conduct which makes a necessary and fundamental part of the education of those who are designed to educate others; and the elaborate manner in which they are taught the *practical* science of teaching. On quitting the school they undergo an examination both on religious and general knowledge; the examination is conducted by two clergymen of the faith of the pupil, and two laymen. If he pass the ordeal, the pupil receives a certificate, not only vouching for the capabilities and character of the destined teacher and his skill in practical tuition, but, annexing also an account of the *exact* course of studies he has undergone.

An institution of this nature cannot be too strongly insisted upon.‡ In vain shall we build

* In England, also, certain *private* associations have tacitly confessed the expediency of such institutions.

† The law even enjoins careful selection as to the town or neighbourhood in which the seminaries for teachers shall be placed; so that the pupils may not easily acquire from the inhabitants any habits contrary to the spirit of the moral and simple life for which they are intended.

‡ Insisted upon for the sake of religion as well as of knowledge. Hear the enlightened Cousin again: "The destined teachers of popular schools, without being at all Theologians, ought to have a clear and precise knowledge of Christianity, its history, its doctrines, and above all, its morals; without this, they might enter on their mission without being able to give any other religious instruction than the recitation of the catechism, *a*

schools if we lack competent tutors. Let me summon Mr. Crook, the Clerk of St. Clement's Parish, in a portion of the evidence on the Poor-laws, which as yet is *unpublished*. It gives an admirable picture of a schoolmaster for the poor.

"One master was employed in keeping an account of the beer, and it was found that he had not only got liquors supplied to himself by various publicans, and charged an equivalent amount of beer to the parish, but had received *money* regularly, and charged it under the head of beer. *It was believed that his scholars had been made agents in the negotiation of these matters!*"

So, in fact, the only thing the Pupils learnt from this excellent pedagogue was the rudiments of swindling!

The order of schools established should be:

1. Infant Schools. These are already numerous in England, but immeasurably below the number required. In Westminster alone, there are nearly 9000 children from two to six years old, fit for infant schools—there are only about 1000 provided with these institutions. Their advantage is not so much in actual education (vulgarly so called) as in withdrawing the children of the poor from bad example, obscene language, the neglect of parents who are busy, the contamination of those who are idle;—lastly, in economy.*

most insufficient lecture;"—Perhaps the only, certainly the best, one our poor children receive. People seem, with us, to think the catechism every thing! they might as well say, the accidence was every thing! the catechism is at most the accidence of religion!

* On this head, read the following extract from the unpublished evidence of Mr. Smart of Bishopsgate:

"Do you find the Infant Schools serviceable in enabling the mothers of the working class to work more, and maintain themselves better?

"That is my opinion. They are enabled to go out and work, when, if there were no such schools, they would be compelled to attend to their children, and would more frequently apply to the

2. Primary or Universal Schools, to which Labour Schools should be attached, or which should rather combine the principle of both.

These schools might, as in Prussia, be divided into two classes, of a higher and lower grade of education; but at the onset, I think one compendious and common class of school would be amply sufficient, and more easily organized throughout the country.

3. Sunday Schools. Of these, almost a sufficient number are already established.

And, 4. Schools for teachers.

But how are such schools to be paid and supported? That difficulty seems to be obviated much more easily than our statesmen are pleased to suppose. In the first place, there are, in all, 450 endowed grammar-schools throughout England and Wales. The greater part of these, with large funds, are utterly useless to the public. I say at once and openly, that these schools, intended for the education of the people, ought to be applied to the education of the people—they are the moral

parish. I conclude this to be the case from the constant declarations of those mothers who have children, and are not able to send them to school. They say they must have assistance from the parish, on account of having to attend to their children. There are many of the families who reside out of the parish, at too great a distance for their infant children to come to their parish school."

"From the whole of your observations, do you consider the general establishment of infant and other schools a matter of economy, viewing their operation only with relation to the parish rules, and the progress of pauperism?

"I have no doubt whatever of it, viz. that their effects are immediately economical merely in a pounds shillings and pence point of view, for I am convinced that, great as the account of pauperism now is, the claims upon the parish funds would be much greater, but for the operation of these schools. Ultimately their effects will be more considerable, preventing the extension of pauperism."

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property of the State, according to the broad intention of the founders.

Some persons have endeavoured to create embarrassments in adapting these schools to use, by insisting on a strict adherence to the exact line and mode of instruction specified by the endowers. A right and sound argument if the *principle* of the endower had been preserved. But *is* the principle preserved?—*is* knowledge taught?—If not, shall we suffer the principle to be lost, because we insist on rigidly preserving the details? Wherever time has introduced such abuses as have eaten and rusted away the use itself of the establishment, we have before us this option: Shall we preserve, or hall we disregard the main intention of the Donor —Education? If it be our duty to regard *that* before all things, it is a very minor consideration whether we shall preserve the exact details by which he desired his principle to be acted upon. Wherever these details are inapplicable, we are called upon to remodel them*—if this be our duty to the memory of the individual, what is our duty to the State? Are we to suffer the want of an

* The absurd injustice of those who insist on an exact adherence to the original form and stipulation of endowments when they prejudice the poor, is grossly apparent in their defence of a departure from, not only the form and detail, but even the spirit and principle of an endowment, where the rich are made the gainers. These gentlemen are they who defend the departure from the express law of schools that, like the Winchester and Charter-house foundations, were originated *solely* for the benefit of "poor and indigent scholars,"—a law so obviously clear in some foundations, that it imposes upon the scholar an actual oath that he does not possess in the world more than some petty sum—I forget the exact amount—but it is under six pounds. The scholar thus limited, probably now enjoys at least some two or three hundred a year! If we insisted upon preserving the exact spirit of *this* law,—the original intention of the founders,—these gentlemen would be the first to raise a clamour at our injustice!

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